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Designing and Teaching with Role-Playing Games and Simulations in College Classrooms

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Abstract

Role-Playing games and simulations are growing in popularity as pedagogical tools in college classrooms. This capstone examines the current research on this type of teaching method and on how to design them successfully. Then, it will document the author's own games that he designed throughout the course of semester. This capstone will examine three games done by other over various topics. The paper concludes with a brief statement by the other of lessons he learned not covered in previous sections and his findings on the application of role-playing and simulations in college classrooms.

"In the Game of Thrones, you win, or you die." – Cersei Lannister

George RR Martin's signature book-turned-television series, *Game of Thrones*, features a plethora of characters from different backgrounds and stations making moves to position themselves in more and more advantageous positions. Not all are successful, and many lose their life in the process. Cersei Lannister, who is quoted above, begins the series as queen, passes the role onto her children, but is queen again by the current point in the series. A basic knowledge of the patrilineal inheritance system the show uses is enough to suggest just how volatile politics can be in RR Martin's world.

Though it loses some of its entertainment value in the process, when you strip away the series' dramatic and fantastical elements, RR Martin's characters do behave as rational political actors. While the world of politics lacks the brutality of RR Martin's world, at least physically, it is still a competitive world. It is the responsibility of political science instructors to ensure their students not only survive, but thrive in the real world *Game of Thrones*, whether for them that means eventually coordinating political campaigns (or being the politician themselves), succeeding as a lawyer, or becoming a tenured academic themselves.

Currently, our university school systems are geared to provide students with the knowledge to succeed, but often lack any real training on how to operationalize that knowledge, especially for the most ambitious of students. Political science undergraduates interested in law school, for example, may graduate with a thorough knowledge of the court system and legal procedure, but without any skill arguing a case on their own. Our future diplomats can have a bountiful knowledge of international systems and comparative politics, but never negotiated through them before. Lacking these skills, at best, puts them no worse off than many of their

counterparts. However, at worst, even significant advantages in other traditional benchmarks such as GPA or GRE scores may not be enough for students to standout against others who are able to show at least an aptitude for this kind of experience.

This idea is not revolutionary. Mock Trial and Model UN programs seek to provide these students with the opportunity to develop those skills in simulated setting. However, these programs are not available at every university. Even if they were, it is unfair for the university to limit students to these extra-curricular activities if they want this type of experience. University students have more demands on their time than we often care to consider, such as maintaining a potentially full-time job or taking care of family members, such as older relatives or their own children. If a political science program really wants to promote its ability to provide students with practical and marketable experience in their desired profession, then the responsibility becomes theirs to provide these opportunities, not as an extra-curricular, but within the standard curriculum.

This can be accomplished by using role-playing games and simulations in the classroom. By incorporating role-playing games in the curriculum, the department can both continue to provide the same learning experience it was already, but also give the students a chance to take the reins on the mechanisms that make our world function. Rather than simply absorb information in a British Politics class, students can work the negotiations and attempt to "solve" out themselves. Beyond learning the mechanisms, student will also acquire and develop skills universally sought after by employers and graduate schools, including but not limited to their ability to communicate, lead, and make decisions.

Why Play is Important

Jean Piaget theorized that humans learn through play as we develop[1]. A more contemporary psychologist, Dr. Jordan Peterson of Toronto University, also subscribes to this theory[2]. The premise that both psychologists (Peterson interpreting and building on Piaget and other's work) put forward is that play has a very high potential for learning in humans Most play is really an observational experiment in disguise, though perhaps an experiment with quite an abstract and often subconscious hypothesis. A classic toy designed to exploit this phenomena is the cube with multiple shapes cut into the side, with corresponding shapes of blocks. As kids manipulate the toy and try different combinations, they learn that the block needs to match the corresponding hole to fit, and they begin to develop their ability to recognize patterns and other synergies in the world around them. Dr. Peterson, in many of his lecture videos, discusses the importance of play-wrestling, or what is commonly referred to as "rough-housing". Whether it is with siblings or a parent, playing that way not only helps the child exercise and develop other physical attributes such as coordination and balance, but also social skills. For example, it is not socially correct to jab someone in the eye, because that hurts much more than other types of physical interaction.

This psychology of learning through play is important when considering role-play and simulations in classrooms. There are parallels between this kind of natural trial and error process and what a student may go through in class using pedagogical role-playing. By engaging in the mechanics of the world, supplementing the raw information they are learning in class, students can learn about the impact of different policies in different situations. Failure, especially, can be a powerful learning tool. The cube and blocks from the earlier example can be replaced with a

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[1] Jean Piaget, To Understand is to invent: the future of education (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1980).
[2] Jordan B. Peterson "Biblical Series III: God and the Hierarchy of Authority." YouTube video, 2:40:52. https://youtu.be/R_GPAl_q2QQ

decision to invade a country or not. The blocks become student choices, and the hole is a positive effect. The student has plenty of "blocks" to consider, whether to invade or not, and perhaps with how large of a force. Once a student looks at his blocks carefully, the move will be made. If it fits, perhaps representing a successful invasion, then the student has shown they were able to identify why. If it does not, however, there is a larger teaching moment, perhaps an unconsidered ally of the invaded country. Whether tanks or triangles, the learning process is the same.

Existing Role-Playing Structures and Research

Roleplaying in the political science classroom is a fairly new but increasingly popular method of teaching. Instructors have already began adapting roleplaying into their classroom. Carolyn Shaw provides a history of the development in classroom role-playing in her article "Designing and Using Simulations and Role-Play Exercises," which was written for the Oxford Encyclopedia. Many in the field of International Relations have at least heard of Model United Nations, even if they have not participated in it themselves or their university does not have the program. However, few know that before Model United Nations, there was Model League of Nations, which is a testament to how long these types of role-playing have been being used[3]. According to Shaw, academic research that focused on role-playing really began in the 1960s. Initial research was mostly devoted to the effectiveness of role-playing as a teaching method[4]. Then, a natural progression occurred in the early 1980s, when research evolved from exploring the effectiveness of role-playing games to optimizing them to be as effective as possible[5]. This

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[3] Carolyn Shaw. Teaching &Designing and Using Simulations and Role-Play Exercises. Oxford Research Encyclopedia of International Studies. 8 Mar. 2018. http://internationalstudies.oxfordre.com/view/10.1093/acrefore/9780190846626.001.0001/acrefore-9780190846626-e-66.

[4] Ib id
[5] Ib id

suggests that the previous research convincingly proved that role-playing was an effective tool in a classroom.

Shaw then showcases the benefits of roleplaying by appropriating Greenblat's six categories of benefits while synthesizing it with other relevant literature. The first and most concrete category of benefit is the cognitive benefit. This covers both surface level learning of facts and information, as well as the brains ability to operationalize this information in a simulation setting[6]. One of the challenges of identifying how much students cognitive abilities improve form role-playing and simulations is that there is no conclusive way to test for factors like an improvement in decision making. One supplemental study Shaw includes by Shade and Paine is that marginal students showed a higher increase in participation than already high-achieving students, suggesting, though inconclusively, a positive appeal to different styles of learning[7].

The next category of potential benefits is affective learning. Affective learning is the learning of social skills, such as empathy and the ability to see multiple perspectives on a topic[8]. These skills are again hard to measure, but, optimistically, a simulation or role-playing game could lead a student to consider a positive opportunity or life-path that they would not have otherwise. It could also lead them to have more positive daily interactions with others.

The third category includes the benefits of increased motivation and interest. While it cannot be qualitatively proven, like the potential benefit to cognitive and affectual learning, there is anecdotal evidence from past simulations. Examples from Shaw's sources include trading lunch breaks for longer play sessions, higher levels of reading and assignment completion in

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[6] Ib id
[7] Ib id
[8] Ib id

classes that included simulations, and a significant percentage of students wanting to change their major to the topic covered[9]. This is the category that is most symbiotic with the idea of "fun."

The fifth category is benefits in self-awareness. This seems to be the least supported category, as it is not only difficult to prove empirically but also difficult to generally comprehend. Shaw provides the idea that a student may learn to see themselves in contrast to the world around them, but this category appears to be the least likely or consistent claim[10].

The final category of benefits is the positive effect on student-faculty relationships. There is some evidence that there is an increase in student-faculty interactions in the relaxed environment of a class with a simulation, and that students in simulation or role-playing classes tend to be more receptive and appreciative of interactions with the instructor[11]. Shaw also discusses the brief mentions of benefits for instructors and other faculty, such as the immediate learning feedback of students' performances in the simulation and that teaching in a unique way such as through role-playing can help junior faculty stand out when they try to obtain tenure[12].

Shaw continues by providing the ways and circumstances that simulation and role-play games are effective as evidenced by her research. Simulation and role-play are not perfect for all learning goals, and having a specific reason for role-playing as well as specific learning objectives are imperative. Simulation and role-play are best when used to teach a specific process of something, or, in other words, how and why something works rather than what something is. Simulation and role-play are also useful for building skills that a lecture is unable

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[9] Ib id
[10] Ib id
[11] Ib id
[12] Ib id

of accomplishing. Role-playing can also create a stimulus for students to research one topic more vigorously, which makes them potentially valuable in classes with a narrow but deep scope[13].

When designing a game, there should be an emphasis on desired outcomes. Qualities such as validity, reliability, and utility separate good, effective games from ineffective games[14]. For example, the goals of my Brexit simulation were to teach students about the Brexit process as well as build interpersonal skills. This was taken into account all the way through the design process. Shaw and her research also stress that not all games are the same[15]. *Reacting to the Past* and Mock Trial are both examples of simulations and role-playing games, but are fundamentally different in both their objectives and execution[16]. This suggests that there are some generalizations that can be made about this type of teaching, but the details of each game are always going to be specific and unique.

Shaw operationalizes her research in her own pedagogy. This is documented in her piece "Pedagogy in International Studies: Using Role-Play Scenarios in the IR Class." She discusses both games simultaneously. The first simulation was a peacekeeping exercise, where students were made to settle a three-way civil war in the fake country of Zodora, the second a simulation of potential escalation in the Colombian crisis in respect to the FARC rebels.[17]. In the peacekeeping game, Shaw states her learning objectives as the students being able to: "(1) identify the different actors involved in peacekeeping and their different interests; (2) identify potential conflicting goals and interactions between the actors; (3) identify the heavy resource

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[13] Ib id
[14] Ib id
[15] Ib id
[16] Ib id
[17]Carolyn Shaw. Teaching & Pedagogy in International Studies: Using Role-Play Scenarios in the IR Classroom: An Examination of Exercises on Peacekeeping Operations and Foreign Policy Decision Making.& International Studies Perspectives 5, no. 1 (February 2004): 1-22. Academic Search Complete, EBSCOhost (accessed April 18, 2018).

demands necessary for successful peacekeeping operations; (4) creatively consider what strategies or tactics would achieve specific goals for peacekeeping actors; and (5) recognize the complex coordination issues necessary for successful peacekeeping operations.[18]" For the second game, her learning objectives where to: "(1) recognize and understand the different models of foreign policy decision making as presented in lecture and the text; (2) recognize the time constraints and challenges decision-makers face; and (3) think analytically and creatively about the policy options available to decision makers in a crisis situation[19]." In these goals is a clear emphasis on teaching the processes at play in both games.

While all her listed goals would fall strongly into the cognitive learning benefits, some of her later design decisions suggest that Shaw was also cognizant of affectual learning benefits as well. This shows mostly in her decisions on how to design the teams. When she built the groups, she designed them in small groups so that each individual voice could be heard while encouraging cooperation. She also assigned some of the more outspoken students to leadership positions, to let their energy influence the class[20]. She also made the decision to put students in roles where the perspective may not have matched their own[21]. In a more practical move, Shaw also spread the students who were frequently absent out among different groups[22]. This engages those affectual benefits because it encourages students to engage in the social aspects of working within a team and adapting and utilizing individual strengths.

Shaw then contextualized her game with the background information she assigned to her students. She warns that it is easy for instructors to believe their students are more familiar with a

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[18] Ib id
[19] Ib id
[20] Ib id
[21] Ib id
[22] Ib id

subject than they truly are[23]. To avoid this, Shaw recommends making information abundant before and during the activity, so that students have their own reference outside of the instructor. This can cause fourth-wall breaking that interrupts the flow of the game[24]. For her games, Shaw assigned her students information on the fictional civil war and a summary of the FARC conflict[25].

As Shaw's next step, she designed the instructions and rules for her games. It could be conceived that at least an outline of the instructions and rules should be completed first, as it may inform other steps. These should reflect the goals of the games, as they are the best tool to steer the game in the correct direction, as they will be what influences the students' learning experience most. In the peacekeeping game, Shaw's NGO teams were all given mandates and tools they were allowed to use to achieve those goals, such as feeding victims of the conflict[26]. In the FARC conflict game, the different departments were given different goals and different mechanisms to achieve those goals, depending on which bureau the team was inhabiting[27].

Shaw's final step was creating a timetable for the games. In some situations, the timetable may be predetermined, but if the instructor has the license over their own class then it is up them how long they think is appropriate to devote to an individual game. Also relevant to this process is deciding how long contextualizing and debriefing the game will take, as this needs to be considered with the timetable as well. Simulations could have entire classes or programs devoted to them, such as a *Reacting to the Past* class, or be a one-day exercise, such as the ones later in this paper[28].

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[23] Ib id
[24] Ib id
[25] Ib id
[26] Ib id
[27] Ib id
[28] Ib id

Shaw felt her exercises were successful, which the feedback that she presents suggests is accurate. Determining success is difficult, as it is very subjective, as even if the student or professor are assigning empirical values to their experience, that assignment is opinion or conjecture. Shaw had her students complete assessment surveys, which she used to aid her in determining the activities success. Success in her information learning objectives was evidenced by her students being able to name all the actors in her peacekeeping game and their objectives[29]. Students were able to identify the challenges NGOs face in these sort of circumstances in the real world, and after the game students rated their understanding of NGO peacekeeping to be very high, both of which demonstrate a greater understanding of the processes that they were simulating[30].

Nicolas Proctor in his "Game Designer's Handbook" picks up where Shaw leaves off, providing aspiring instructors with methods on how to design and run a role-playing game in a classroom. Proctor's experience is chiefly with *Reacting to the Past* games, and his handbook is a collection of advice from other classroom game designers as well as himself. Much of the insight he included in his handbook comes from the Facebook group "Reacting to the Past Faculty Lounge," which serves as a forum to role-playing instructors[31]. Some of the advice is specific to *Reacting to the Past* but many elements can be expanded to cover a range of game types.

Proctor echoes the sentiment of having clear learning goals before beginning game design. While clarifying learning objectives, Proctor offers a series of questions designed to narrow a game's purpose. These include determining setting, the characters involved, the big

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[29] Ib id
[30] Ib id
[31] Nicolas W. Proctor, *Game Designers Handbook* (New York, NY: Barnard College, 2013).

ideas of the game, what context will be provided beforehand, what will be left to the student to learn, and how all of these factors interact with one another[32]. Among these questions, Proctor also urges instructors to ask why to use a game at all, reinforcing that role-play is not necessarily the best pedagogy for all student learning objectives[33].

To maintain simplicity, Proctor advises to think of the empirical and mathematical elements first. Measurable factors like votes or soldier numbers are easiest to begin with because they are often the clearest[34]. It is the same reason that the corners and edges of a puzzle are easiest to do first; they clearly belong on the outside due to their flat sides, and provide a shape for the rest of the puzzle. In this instance, being able to put a number on a detail is the "edge" that separates it from the other details, and it is a point from which more abstract details can be developed.

Besides this, Proctor also recommends designing a "Primary System" for the game to work around. This is simply the central mechanism that moves the game forward[35]. In a baseball game, it is moving the players around the bases to score runs. In role-playing games, it could be acquiring enough votes to pass a measure. After this, determining and designing "Secondary Systems" is the next step. These systems connect the other details together, and provide assistance towards winning the game[36]. In baseball, to continue the metaphor, throwing strikeouts would be considered a secondary system. The game cannot be won by strikeouts alone, but they certainly help a team towards victory. In a role-playing game, this could be acquiring additional resources. Proctor also suggests using a visual representation of the game

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[32] Ib id
[33] Ib id
[34] Ib id
[35] Ib id
[36] Ib id

systems at play so it is clear to both instructor and player[37]. Typically, this would most likely take the form a scoreboard.

Proctor continues by presenting strategies for creating game context. He first introduces readers to Johan Huizinga's "Magic Circle," which is the sense of immersion players feel when playing the game[38]. While immersion can be created through simple gameplay, it can be enhanced by changing the room to either reflect the setting or be more intuitive to the game systems. Students dressing up or speaking in character can also add to the immersion[39].

The reader's attention is then turned to the instructor's role as Gamemaster, or GM. While Proctor says that the better and clearer the game systems are, the less students will need the GM, but the GM will *always* be necessary[40]. Roles the GM may need to fulfill are umpire, facilitator, arbitrator, reality checker, and, sometimes, play a character's role themselves as a special guest[41].

Proctor also provides insight on representing rules and systems to players in a clear manner. *Explicit rules* are written down, and guide the game[42]. *Implicit rules*, conversely, are not written down and are assumed[43]. The distinction may seem remedial, but being thoughtful about this step is important, especially when considering Shaw's warning that many instructors have too much faith in their students' prior knowledge What an instructor assumes should be implicit is not always the case. This means thoughtful discrimination between what is implicit and explicit very important. Proctor also warns against being too liberal with adding or changing

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[37] Ib id
[38] Ib id
[39] Ib id
[40] Ib id
[41] Ib id
[42] Ib id
[43] Ib id

rules mid-game. Rule adjustments can occur, but the game should have rule support in place for

doing so, and it should be implemented in such a way that a team does not feel cheated[44].

From here, Proctor continues by offering considerations to take when developing the

player roles. He does this by providing the instructor with questions that players should be able

to answer: What must I do? Who am I? What or how do I think? What am I capable of? What are

others perception of me? And how do I win[45]? If a player can answer these questions easily, then

it can be surmised that the player has command over their character and role. Proctor also

suggests allowing characters who are not based off of real people to be named by their players[46].

This not only gives the player more ownership over their character, but can separate them from

their character if something about their character is different than contemporary norms[47].

Proctor also makes a point that the game must have true consequences that are also

realistic. The "Plausibility Corridor" is the space in realism which players play, which may be

based on real events but potential for deviation from the historical or predictable outcome[48].

Proctor provides three methods for instructors to keep game realistic. The *persistence* strategy is

where the game holistically revolves around one major issue. While it keeps the players centered

on the main problem and makes it hard for the game to escape plausibility, players could be

frustrated continually working on just one issue[49]. *Injections* allow the GM to insert events to

bring the game back into focus, at the risk of upsetting players who worked hard to create the

measure that has been balanced[50]. *Gradualism* compartmentalizes decisions, which limits

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[44] Ib id
[45] Ib id
[46] Ib id
[47] Ib id
[48] Ib id
[49] Ib id
[50] Ib id

possible outcomes[51]. This can cause games to feel static. Each method has different strengths and weaknesses, and using any of them has to be weighed against the importance of plausibility to the game[52].

Proctor also addresses player fatigue. In longer games, teams that are ahead can begin to feel complacent, and teams that are behind can begin to feel hopeless. Another similar issue is extreme factioning, which Proctor calls "lock-up.[53]" This is where players work themselves into permanent majorities and form voting blocs that are unhealthy for the game. There are remedies to this. One is by creating the factions so that the factions are different enough and appeal to all indeterminates (players without a faction) in strong ways. Another is by scheduling decisions and selectively revealing information in such a way as to keep the game interesting throughout[54]. Injections can also be used to balance the scales in particularly one sided games[55].

Proctor also takes the time to discuss assassination or murder as game mechanic specifically. This refers to any game system where players can eliminate each other's characters out of games[56]. Proctor advises only to include it when it makes sense, and when present, there should be hoops for players to jump through or risks involved[57]. Player elimination should not be taken lightly, and not done instead of other strategies that work better or because it seems "fun[58]." If a player is eliminated, they should be given ample time to learn a new role[59]. Proctor also proposes possibly giving the eliminated player's new role a "super power," to ease the blow

[51] Ib id
[52] Ib id
[53] Ib id
[54] Ib id
[55] Ib id
[56] Ib id
[57] Ib id
[58] Ib id
[59] Ib id

of having to restart. However, should this be the case, it is important the player does not have the ability to abuse this power to get revenge on their killer[60].

Eventually, the game needs an ending. Proctor's biggest piece of advise for this is to include mechanisms that discourage players from making drastic moves at the end of games, especially if they are losing[61]. It would be a shame to lose weeks of progress because a losing player decided to use what resources they had to make a suicide charge that ruins all the progress of the other players.

After the end of the game, it is important to debrief in some form. This helps the instructor decipher if their students met the learning objectives, and is one more opportunity for learning. Proctor warns some players have a hard time disassociating themselves from the game, and may continue to argue their side's points even after the game[62]. He suggests a social outing back into the "real world" to intentionally break immersion[63]. Debriefing is also a good time for instructors to come clean about historical inaccuracies and set the record straight with their students[64].

Proctor concludes his book with a chapter on game development practices. He stresses the importance of playtesting, which is great peer review but takes up time[65]. It is best to playtest with strangers if possible, because they do not have a stake in your success or failure and will be more honest than friends and colleagues who may be afraid to be honest, ironically to your detriment[66].

Building a Game: The Experts in the Gaming Industry

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[60] Ib id
[61] Ib id
[62] Ib id
[63] Ib id
[64] Ib id
[65] Ib id
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This semester I will have designed three games with quite different premises. For each, I needed to take different aspects into considerations. This does not mean there was not any overlap between the games. In fact, one of the key components in all of the games is fun. "Fun" here directly translates into student engagement. Another demographic of experts I referred to, outside of those in academia, are those who make games as their livelihood. Whether it is for learning, killing time, or a serious hobby, games are all over our society. It is important that a game designed for learning still feels like a game, otherwise, regardless of the intention, the activity will then come off as a something else and the energy the students bring to it would not be what is desired. This is especially when the purpose of the game is to mimic or replicate something a professional in the field would do; the students need to approach it with the same tenacity said professional would.

The Game Developer Conference, or GDC, is an annual gathering of game creators with the goal of sharing strategies amongst each other in the efforts that everyone can make the best games possible. The conference attracted 26,000 people in 2016, and is the largest event of its kind[67]. High-profile presentations are made available to the public on YouTube as well as in their GDC Vault, on their website. While often these conference topics have nothing to do with teaching through games, such as how lighting may affect a video game's presentation, many of the broader game design presentations are actually easily adapted to game building for the purpose of teaching.

Bennett Foddy addressed player engagement in his 2013 presentation, "Making it Matter: Lessons from Real Sports." His premise is that real sports have qualities that not only get players excited to play, but gets fans excited to watch. He says games should be more like a performance

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[67] UBM Game Network, "About GDC," GDConf.com, accessed March 4, 2018, http://www.gdconf.com/aboutgdc/.

than a solitary activity[68]. He expresses the importance of the difference between knowing what to

do, and actually being able to perform it[69]. This explains the difference between knowing a lot

about strategy in basketball, and being able to actually implement it; without the proper athletic

qualities, the basketball expert still could not make it in the NBA. This is easily applicable to

classroom role-playing games. A key purpose of running a game in a class is often to teach the

students to operationalize their knowledge. Similarly, Foddy also discusses the difference

between practice and the performance, his anecdote being that Usain Bolt probably broke the

world record many times, but it only mattered when at the Olympics[70]. The difference between

the two situations is the gravity of the performances. Foddy suggests to "make the game epic,"

which could be reflected in the classroom by the scoring system, or may occur even naturally as

students create their own spotlight in front of their peers[71]. Both points are intuitive to building

player and student engagement.

 Eric Dodds, a designer for Hearthstone, an increasingly popular virtual card game made

by Blizzard, gave a presentation at GDC 2014 called "Hearthstone: 10 Bits of Design

Wisdom."[72] The theme of the presentation is what designers should consider while building their

game. Dodds says designers should "share the vision." He means this in the context of a team,

but even when working individually the designer should have a goal in mind, and make a

conscious effort to stick to it[73]. Everything in the game should have something to do with

advancing that goal. Dodds seemingly contradicts himself with two sequential points, "Simplify"

[68] Bennett Foddy. "Making it Matter: Lessons." Speech, GDC 2013, Mascone Center, San Francisco. January 26, 2018. Accessed March 4, 2018. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5uUPPtBJqR0&t=1299s.
[69] Ib id
[70] Ib id
[71] Ib id
[72] Eric Dodds. "Hearthstone: 10 Bits Of Design Wisdom." Speech, GDC 2014, Mascone Center, San Francisco. November 12, 2015. Accessed March 7, 2018. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pyjDMPTgxxk
[73] Ib id

and "Keep it Deep." What both points suggest when combined is that the complexity and depth of your game should come from the simplicity. By not bogging down a player with clunky rules and mechanics, the character can be more expressive and have more choices[74]. Often what happens is by adding more systems or mechanics to the game, more rules and restrictions also come with it, and the player actually has less choices than they did before. This is especially relevant for classroom role-play, where creativity is encouraged. The more that is added to a role-playing game, the less agency the player gets, and the more the game stops being a game rather than some other kind of activity and performance.

Mark Rosewater is the lead designer for Magic: the Gathering, an immensely popular trading card game. His "Magic: the Gathering: Twenty Years, Twenty Lessons Learned" presentation debuted at GDC 2016. Many of Rosewater's points have to do with aesthetics and player perception[75]. Often, a player's perception of a part of a game fails to match the designer's intention. For him, it meant that cards featuring zombies should have a way to come back from being destroyed, and that one zombie should not be tremendous challenge, but multiple zombies should be tough[76]. In a political role-playing game, this could mean that your voting or decision-making mechanisms should feel correct, that players should have a correct range of responses to an action, and that goals make sense for the type of faction the player is a part of. He also advocates in his thirteenth point that making the fun part of the game the correct strategy is immensely useful[77]. If the point of a roleplaying exercise is to show how the International Court of Justice works, the more fun the process of presenting evidence and arguing the case, the more

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[74] Ib id

[75] Mark Rosewater. "Magic: the Gathering: Twenty Years, Twenty Lessons Learned." Speech, GDC 2016, Mascone Center, San Fransisco. May 2, 2016. Accessed March 7, 2018.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QHHg99hwQGY.

[76] Ib id

[77] Ib id

likely students will engage with the game positively and the more students will learn. Rosewater also gives practical tips on board game design. His fifth point is that even though a mechanic is interesting, it may not be fun[78]. Even if the designer believes the mechanic is a really neat trick, if the players perceive it negatively the game, and learning experience, will suffer.

Sid Meier is a known as the "Father of Computer Gaming," known mostly for his work on the Civilization series. His talk, "The Psychology of a Gamer," was given at GDC 2010. Meier talks the audience through his process of learning about player perception, and avoiding relevant pitfalls. His point about rewarding players versus punishing players is very relevant to an instructor looking to use games in the classroom. The "reward" a professor has access to is most often going to be how they choose to score the game. Meier's point is that players tend to view a punishment as more impactful than an equal reward. In other words, losing an objective feels worse than gaining an objective of an equal value. To put this into the context of a role-playing game or simulation, instructors need to be very careful about penalizing players too much or too frequently. Doing so could lead to discouraging players, possibly to the extent they do not believe they ever had a chance, which could cause them to lose faith in the instructor's ability.

Meier's also talks about an "Unholy Alliance" game designers have with the players. On the designer's end, they have to pretend the players are "good." Of course, not all players are "good," and this holds true for students as well. This being said, a more fair and productive statement is that all students are *capable* of an acceptable performance, if not an excellent one, in a role-playing game. An instructor can advocate this in a few ways, but one way is to diversify the roles available to each team. This allows students to find a position that suits them and that

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[78] Ib id

they, *are* "good" at, even if they struggle with other aspects of the game. From the players

perspective of Meier's "Unholy Alliance," they have to put trust in the designer to "just go with

it." This is a bit trickier for instructors than for a traditional game designer or developer. For a

traditional game, often by the time the player makes the decision to pick a game up off the shelf

they have already decided to accept at least some amount of logical stretching. People typically

do not have a vertical jump of twice their body height and while GMOs have come a long way,

there is still no mushroom that instantly causes someone to double in size. This, however, has not

stopped gamers from playing Super Mario Bros. Because the nature of a role-playing game for

pedagogical purposes is often specifically to replicate the real world closely, it can be perceived

that there is an increased pressure on instructors to be accurate. However, it may be better for the

learning experience to make creative choices and change some aspects of the true system for a

better learning experience.

Meier concludes his speech by talking about the "Epic Journey" designers are responsible

for leading players on. These are the qualities that make a game addictive, or, in Meier's words,

give games "replayability." This is something Meier is an authority on, as his *Civilization* series

is known for its addictive qualities. The two points he makes that can be applied to a class role-

playing game are giving the player interesting decisions and positive feedback from progressing,

and by extension, learning. Meier describes interesting decisions as choices players make that

give them a lot of agency as the game moves forward. *Civilization* gives players both interesting

long term and short term decisions. Players can choose their own long term strategy, such as

trying to win the game through aggressively pursuing scientific advancement and winning a

space race or building an indefatigable army that conquers all of the other civilizations. Within

these large strategies, there are smaller, micro decisions. The science player needs to decide if he

should build a library, increasing their immediate scientific progress, or a new city, which would increase their total potential output across the board. The militaristic player needs to decide if he wants to build an army of fast moving cavalry, or powerful but slow catapults, or perhaps even a combination of the two. *Civilization* actually works as great analogy for transposing these choices into a political science class. Some students may decide to try to achieve their political goals diplomatically, and use soft power to try to gain favor with the other players. Other students may take the more Realist approach, and coerce, intimidate, or even beat their other classmates into subordination. From this point is where positive feedback from learning and making progress can be addressed. Most everyone is familiar with the concept of "leveling up." Leveling up is what many video games use to show this progress, often making the player's character stronger or providing better equipment for completing some task. Students in a classroom may experience real life leveling up as they feel themselves mastering concepts and applying them to the game.

Building Original Games

As part of this project, I will have created and executed three games in three classes. Two of these will be in Dr. Todd Richardson's *Perspectives on US American Culture* class, through the Goodrich Program, and the third will be in Dr. Elizabeth Chalecki's *Intro to International Relations* class. I will later discuss the specifics of the games and classes, but there exist general similarities.

My first goal was that students enjoyed the activity. If the students enjoy the activity, the likelihood they approach it with more vigor increases, which increases their involvement with the subject and, therefore, increases their familiarity with the subject and decision making processes around it. Recognizing that I only had one class for each game, my goal was not to

teach in such a way as to provide them knowledge; rather I designed my games with a desire to develop skills, such as decision making, communication, prioritization, and negotiation.

My method of evaluation came from the *UNO Guide for the Assessment of General Education Outcomes,* which emphasizes setting desired Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs), designing a curriculum with a purpose of students attaining these outcomes, and properly evaluating student performance[79]. By using this approach, I can evaluate each class in the same way the university would. All materials in the games can be found in the appendix, which begins on page 50. Some materials were changed slightly for better formatting.

Class 1: Immigration Project

I was tasked by my faculty advisor, Dr. Richardson, to create a game that involves immigration. The class this game was designed for was *Perspectives on US American Culture.* This class is required in the Goodrich program, a diversity-based scholarship community that focuses on helping students who demonstrate a financial need. The broad expectation of the class is to explore the different ways the United States is viewed by the different demographics of the United States; however, professors have a large amount of academic freedom to address and even define this objective in whichever way they see appropriate and effective. As a member of the Goodrich program, I took *Perspectives* as a sophomore, though not with Dr. Richardson. The class is Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, from 10 AM until nearly noon, and is worth 5 credit hours. The class is not inherently a political science class, but stripped of its broad humanities label, it could certainly classify as a political science class. What is politics if not an infinite feedback loop of civil leaders and policy makers reacting to their constituents' perspective on their country?

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[79] *UNO Guide for the Assessment of General Education Student Learning Outcomes*, Guide, General Education, University of Nebraska-Omaha (Omaha, NE: University If Nebraska-Omaha).

My SLOs for this game were, broadly, to engage students in a generic democratic process and introduce them to perspectives that they had not considered before. A tertiary student learning outcome was to give the students the chance to develop their communication and negotiation abilities. Whether this was achieved would be in-game observation and a debrief the next class.

Before I developed this game, I had to make several considerations. My first consideration was to make sure that the game matched the goal of the class. Focusing on issues like immigrant push and pull factors or to what degree would President Trump's prospective "wall" could be effective would be appropriate for a political science class but would not meet the needs of *Perspectives*. This type of curriculum would suite other types of political science classes, but for the purpose of this class something more foundational was needed. My true goal was not concerned with policy *solutions* but policy *causes*, and how citizens' perception of their world can change how they pressure their representatives to approach issues, such as immigration.

The obvious starting point is to divide the class into American Democrats and Republicans and let them debate the two sides until either a stalemate is met or we prove that a class of 20 kids, most of whom barely old enough to simply vote, can compromise more effectively in two hours than about 500 adults three times their age can in years. As compelling the opportunity at showing up congress with a class of mostly college freshman was, I had fundamental problems with this approach. First, it was not intuitive to creativity. It would have been far too easy for students to simply recite the rhetoric they had heard on television or read on the internet for two hours. I wanted students to come up with their own solutions to immigration, which is very difficult when they have been subconsciously absorbing others' solutions through

media. Another problem I had was that students may have strong attachments to the issue in question, and basing the debate over American immigration might be too emotional a subject. Goodrich attracts students who are directly affected by immigration both as members of recently immigrated families or as part of communities who are experiencing negative effects of immigration. Finally, dividing the class up into two teams of ten presented a logistical challenge where the most out-going students would have stood out disproportionately.

My solution to all of these problems was to create my own fictitious country, which was simply called "The Nation." This allowed me to disassociate the idea of immigration from the tired rhetoric we constantly hear in the United States, as well as keeping students in emotionally attached demographics from over-identifying with the game's hypothetical characters. I described the Nation as a country, though those in the political science community will be quick to point out that technically, the Nation is neither a nation nor a country, but a certified state. This was intentional, as I chose to use language that was easier for my audience to grasp, rather than try to teach the students new vocabulary for just one activity. The Nation is broken up into four "states", each named after the four cardinal directions. Each state's geography and socio-economic status informed their citizens' opinions about immigration. Each state was in a different stage of economic development. These details were expressed so bluntly and clearly that the Nation may one day be repurposed for a game or activity to teach the stages of development as well. Dividing the Nation up this way solved the logistics issue as well, cutting the number of team members from ten on each to only four or five.

The premise of the game was that each team was composed of representatives from their own states, looking to get re-elected to the legislature. To do this, they had to get their approval rating above 51%. This would result in them beating their state's challengers, who promised they

would reform immigration more to their state's desire if the incumbent was unable to show they were capable of doing so. Whichever team ended the game with the highest rating would get the Chairman position, which was essentially their legislature's Speaker of the House. This gave each team a minimum success to aim for, but also a way to compete against each other.

The North was representative of most core countries economically, and its citizens represented the traditional perspectives and viewpoints of American Democrats. Its GDP was far and away the largest, as it hosted most of the Nation's major service sector businesses Its people were the most sympathetic to immigrants, regardless of where the immigrants were coming from. The South was the North's direct counterpart. The South received more immigrants than the rest of the Nation, and its resource-based economy resulted in it having the lowest GDP. The South is meant to represent the poorest Americans who feel the negative effects of immigration most, a demographic that lends itself to hardline restrictionist policy.

After developing states to represent my main axis of debate, I needed to create two that were moderate. Moderate does not mean indifferent; rather, my moderate states needed to agree with the North on some issues, the South on others, and to varying degrees. The East was the only state without a land border with a foreign country. However, its vast coastline lent itself to shipping, and its economy was based on logistics. While this is not considered a recognized type of economy when we look at the stages of economic development, there are many examples of regions in the real world where geography is its greatest asset, such as Gibraltar and post-canal Panama. Culturally, the East worked as a large Ellis Island. The East had been home to immigrants for generations, and it respected the desire for one to start a new life in the Nation. However, the East also demanded respect for the Nation's laws and customs from immigrants. It

was also upset that this generation of immigrants were receiving government benefits that had not existed when they or their ancestors immigrated to the nation themselves.

The West was my final state. It represented economies that relied on immigrant labor but were not necessarily immigrant friendly culturally. It represented the manufacturing stage in economic development, taking the materials from the South and making them into products to be sold in the other states and around the world. The West wanted to keep the immigrant labor it currently had, but cut off the supply of new immigrants to the state to ensure that its current employees would not begin to lose jobs to new immigrant labor. The state was lenient on issues like deportations, but adamant about shrinking the number of newcomers. This was the toughest state to develop, because the sentiment I was trying to exhibit—preserving current economic benefits while protecting established citizens—is awkward and at times contradictory in nature.

Outside of the Nation and its states, there existed three other countries that did not have a player assigned to them. Each of these three countries represented different types of immigrants. I divided countries into classes, to allow for simpler policies to be more effective. Being able to set one policy for a range of countries is far easier than an individual policy for each foreign entity. Each class of country had a quota number of citizens that could immigrate to the Nation before they were cut off for the year. At the beginning of the game, this number was 10,000 households for each country class, a household being a set of parents or parent figures, and any dependents they might have.

Northwesterland bordered the North and West of the nation and was an affluent core country. The immigrants from this country and others like it were considered class X countries. Immigrants from Northwesterland and other class X countries do not typically meet their quota

and rarely have trouble immigrating into the Nation. Pull factors for class X countries are often education opportunities and a desire for a change in scenery from their home country.

Southwesterland, which, as the naming convention continues to suggest, borders the South and West states, and is a class Y country, which indicates a country in the periphery or semi-periphery country whose immigrants typically come for economic reasons. Class Y countries typically have governments that are at least generally functioning, though may be corrupt or mismanaged in some areas. Class Y immigrants often would stay in their country of origin if possible, but the opportunity at higher wages and a better education for their children are often too much to resist, and many immigrate to the Nation, legally or otherwise.

Class Z immigrants are represented by the Nation's final neighbor, Southeasterland, which borders the South and is a short boat ride to the East. Class Z countries are defined as failed or warring states, without functioning governments. Nearly all class Z immigrants are refugees, fleeing conflicts like Southeasterland's civil war. Like class Y countries, class Z countries almost always reach their quota, and many immigrate illegally.

Students were given a map of the Nation and its neighbors, a copy of the premise and rules, a description of their country and goals, a copy of the current policy that they were adjusting, and a set of statistics for them to see where money and people were coming and going. These can all be found in the appendix and used as a reference as I review the decisions I made in creating the game that were not previously touched on.

The creative decisions I made were some of the hardest. I eventually settled on a crude but effective naming convention that used compass directions to name the entities in the world. This decision was informed by Rosewater's game design advice which was to use familiarity to aid in clarity. Though the names were boring, it made communication and conceptualization very

simple. I wanted it to be easy for everyone to know where they were in relation to each other and their neighboring countries.

I used this familiarity trick again when it came to incorporating money into the game. Everyone knows how money works, and funding was something that players had to manage. It prevents players from being too liberal with their solutions when they not only have to brainstorm and negotiate solutions but how to fund them as well. In this way it also added to developing plausibility.

There were two main programs that players had to budget for. The first was border security. Initially, I had different types of security "units" players could purchase, such as individual guards or patrol boats, letting them have some agency over how their border was protected. However, this was replaced by making it so a larger budget would positively affect voters in that region if they were in favor of border restrictions. I was not sure I could effectively communicate the difference between the units, nor did I think it actually added value to the game beyond simply giving the players more agency. Border security was evenly distributed across all states, and funded by sales taxes, which meant that having a higher GDP meant that a state would contribute more to border security funding.

The second major budget consideration was the IPP, the Immigrant Place Program, which aided immigrants in their assimilation to the Nation. It helped immigrants find jobs, housing, and schools for their kids, as well as provide other support resources. The program was funded by the import tariffs from the class of country the goods were coming from. My method to calculate how much a citizen of a country would receive from the IPP was to first find the total import tariffs from all the countries of the new immigrant's country class. Then that number is divided among all the immigrants of that class. It should be noted that the amount of money in the

economy in proportion to the population is very small. This was to keep the numbers to a reasonable amount that could easily be visualized. Rather than thinking of a dollar in terms of today's value, it may be easier to think of it in terms of earlier parts of American history, when homes could be bought for the price of a sweatshirt today. When Sid Meier talks about gamers giving the developer the benefit of the doubt on certain details that stretch believability, this is the type of detail he was referring too.

Students were simply assigned to read through the instructions, and possibly communicate with their teammates about possible strategies. If I had more time, I may have assigned outside reading to go along with it, but because I was on a small timeline and students had other coursework, all I assigned was the rules. The rules were fairly long, so I felt that was plenty. In the best case scenario, the students would all come prepared with questions to clarify what they were unsure of, and we would be able to begin immediately. However, I thankfully planned for the opposite scenario, in which students did not prioritize the activity, which is what ended up happening. I gave all the groups about fifteen minutes to read through the rules together and from there elaborated or clarified when needed. I also made rounds from group to group to ensure that everyone had some idea of an opening strategy. In playtesting, I realized it was helpful to prompt opening discussion, which I did to start the debate. The first round ended in a stalemate, as the opening bill that was debated grew too large over the course of compromise. I then allowed the groups to privately debate amongst themselves. To incentivize them to pass *something*, I gave them a time limit which they had to meet or they would suffer a penalty. This was both for the sake of moving the class along as well as simulating the pressure voters put on a stagnant government.

They successfully met the goal, passing their first program with five minutes to spare. I allowed them to discuss among themselves again while I scored the round. After this first round, the class felt the rhythm of the game and the next set of rounds moved smoothly. The class passed legislation that introduced immigration restrictions, changed which types of immigrants could move to the country, made adjustments to the IPP program, and shifted funding from program to program.

Each group developed its own identity and strategy. The North was lead by one particularly outgoing student who was good at proposing new ideas but struggled to negotiate as conversation moved around her talking points, at least in the public forum. The North appealed with a lot of emotional rhetoric, not unlike the contemporary rhetoric that comes from the liberal United States. Contrarily, the South was more stubborn, and the toughest negotiators. At one point, they did not vote for a bill that mostly met their goals because they refused to consent to a piece that did not. The bill still passed, which made scoring awkward. I made sure to inquire to their reluctance to vote, as I thought they may have misunderstood their objective, though it turns out that they were simply being stubborn. It is reasonable to think the type of people who live in the South would appreciate that kind of stubbornness, but would also be upset that their representatives would throw away any kind of progress they thought would help their situation. The West was full of STEM students and it showed in their policy approach. They tried what could be equated to a cheat code, in that they tried to replace their immigrant labor with automation. I eventually allowed for some automation, and funding was put towards it. I initially limited the amount they could use this as an option, my reasoning being that automation would hurt all labor markets, not just immigrant labor. The East seemed a bit confused throughout the

game. They had one student with a fairly outgoing nature who seemed to have a handle on it, and they effectively participated, but they never had as strong a voice as the other groups.

The game ended in a three-way tie, with the North being the outlier. I did not mean for it, as I scored the final round live. The scoring throughout was subjective, and if I needed to run the game again, I would try to make a more objective scoring system. I feel I was pretty fair, and received no complaints, but it is always better to be able to point to a rulebook for scoring. It puts an awkward amount of responsibility on the instructor to have to decide how much decisions are worth. Instead of a baseball umpire, where a ball at the knees are strikes some days and balls others, the game would function better if the instructor could be more like a volleyball official, where calls are a lot less subjective.

I would also simplify the IPP. It made sense to me, and if the students had read the instructions the previous night I am certain it would have been better, but it was far and away the most confusing part. Students struggled with both what it actually did and where the funding came from. At times it felt like something students should be able to change unilaterally, but even if states wanted to shift funding from their IPP recipients to their own state's border patrol, they needed two more states approval. I think the program would have made more sense to enfranchised political science students, but not necessarily a typical undergrad.

Had I a longer class period or more classes, giving clear effects of bills passing would have been an interesting. Perhaps restrictions on Class Z immigrants would have caused Southwesterlanders in the Nation to react negatively. Because my goal was really to get students through the debate process and making critical choices, I left out details like that. With a longer class period, I would have been able to expand my scope and introduce reaction of some of these policy decisions to show potential effects of political decisions.

I also would have changed the timing of the class to a week earlier or after spring break. The class and the debrief were both the week before spring break, and the students did display a reasonable amount of being "checked-out."

I feel like the game was mostly successful. From feedback during the debrief, students did express a positive awkwardness of having to argue from perspectives they did not agree with, which shows they were coming into contact with new ideas and viewpoints. I think students did a very good job sticking to their team's objectives, which can be a challenge for individuals who are especially close to a topic. I also think the students did well engaging with the political mechanisms at their disposal. After the first round that stalled, the students began looking at a lot of different angles and ways they could negotiate a bill into being positive for their team. The final bill was a budget overhaul that also relocated immigrants to the North, which to me demonstrated a strong ability to examine the current policy and make smart legislative decisions. My tertiary objective was the hardest to examine, but it can at least be conclusively said that simply providing a forum where productive disagreement could occur was positive. While students disagreed with each other by the nature of the activity, they did so cordially and with respect. While I believe it was a good session of practice for these skills, there were moments where I asked for a response or opinion to a group's policy and received blank stares instead of an answer. If I had a longer class, I would both emphasize these skills as a goal of the class and expect this response to occur less as the year progressed.

The immigration game was fun to put together and run in the class. It was the most complex of the three games. I would consider it a success overall, but there are definitely ways it could be improved if it were to be run again. I also think the game is flexible enough to be manipulated to meet the needs of other classes and environments.

Game 2: Brexit

The second game was a simulation of Brexit. It was run in Dr. Chalecki's *Intro to International Relations* class, a political science class that is required for political science and international studies majors, but is also available to students looking to fill a general education requirement. This game was the most straightforward, as it mimics a real life event and was designed to be a near direct role-play of contemporary international politics.

My SLOs for this game were to teach students about Brexit and the parties involved, put them in the position of the leaders of the factions. I also maintained the tertiary goal of improving debate skills in this game as well. These goals match a political science class far more than they would have the *Perspectives* class.

Along with the type of class, another consideration was time. The class was only an hour and fifteen minutes long, which meant this simulation had to be much quicker and straight forward than the immigration game. I could also expect the student population to be a bit more familiar with the subject matter, especially considering they had just been given a special presentation on the European Union by the department's Europe specialist, Dr. Neathery-Castro. I was also under the impression at the time of design that students would have nothing assigned for that class today, which suggested I could use homework to help give the activity context.

There were far fewer creative decisions to be made in this game. Rather than having to create a new country and constitution, it instead was a matter of choosing which factions and issues of the current debate to include. Much of the gridlock and point of debate in Brexit negotiations has revolved around the Irish Border, so I chose to base the game around that decision. I also included the status of European and British citizens abroad and the "divorce bill," the amount the UK will have to pay to leave the EU to finish paying for their commitments, as

possible debate choices as well, though the border issue was designed to be the primary decision. The reason I focused on one issue instead of trying to approach the whole negotiation is due to the time constraint. The border issue I felt captured the spirit of Brexit and was the best issue to familiarize students with Britain and their relationship to the European Union. Though the player sheets listed multiple debate choices, my expectation was not that the class would solve all of them in the hour and fifteen minute period.

This lead to my choice of factions to also revolve around the Irish border issue. Not all factions in this game were equal, both in size and their power in the game. This was done because true to life, the factions all have different roles and significance to Brexit. In the game, their were three main factions, which had the most agency to sign and create measures. Because I had no experience with this set of students, I randomly assigned students to teams by placing pieces of paper with the team name in a cup and simply having them draw. Some teams' names were in the cup more than the others.

The first of these was the United Kingdom itself. I seeded the faction selection in such a way that the United Kingdom would always be the largest, because it was certainly going to be the faction with the most pressure on it. Having more members would help them consider more perspectives and deal with more factions simultaneously during private deliberation. The UK's signature was needed on nearly all major measures passed in the game. Their goals were meant to reflect the Conservative Party's agenda as lead by Theresa May. The European Union was seeded to be the second largest team in the game. They would be necessary to sign any international deal between European entities, but not for British domestic policies. Their goals were based off of the leadership of Angela Merkel and her interactions with Brexit so far. The last and also actually least of the three major powers was the Republic of Ireland. While the

Republic is part of the EU, it maintains a unique position and was worth including in the game as its own entity. Any measures to do with the island of Ireland needed the Republic's signature. Their goals were modeled after the stance of Leo Varadkar's administration.

The other three factions were labelled as agenda setting factions. Their role was less to be signatories but rather to steer measures towards their own goals. They also wanted to influence public policy towards their perspective. These factions were seeded to be smaller. Scotland was my first agenda setting faction. Like Nicola Sturgeon's Scottish Nationalist Party, the Scotland team was to advocate for a "soft" Brexit, though should the decisions go against them, they were to rally support around a second independence referendum. Unlike the other two agenda setting factions, Scotland was in true opposition with no one, except potentially the United Kingdom. The other two, Sinn Fein and the DUP, were designed to be in direct contention, like their real life counterparts. Sinn Fein's was modelled after Michelle O'Neil and Mary Lou McDonald's example, and like Scotland looked to push the major factions towards a soft Brexit, and, if possible, a referendum for a unification with the Republic. The DUP, conversely, mirrored their leader, Arlene Foster, in wanting a very hard Brexit and the cutting of ties with the Republic of Ireland. All of the team sheets can be found in the appendix.

Public opinion was measured with sliders on the white board. Scotland's was set at zero. Moving the slider to 50% would have triggered an referendum, and moving it to 75% would result in success. The other slider was set at 50% between Sinn Fein and the DUP, and moving it 25% one way or the other would have resulted in either a reunification referendum or the cutting of ties the UK. The sliders would move if one of the agenda-setting factions did anything to significantly move persuade the public towards their position.

There were three external non-player factions. These factions existed, but were not necessary to the game. They represented options or potential consequences for players as they made decisions. The first of these was the United States, which stood to be a potential ally for whichever team could make a case for it. The United States is also known for its "special relationship" with the UK and I would have been remiss not to at least address it in the game. The second non-player faction was extremist groups, alluding to the Irish Republican Army and Ulster Volunteer Force. Players were warned that taking too drastic measures without being tactful could incite violence, which was written as bad for everyone. This faction was meant to help with plausibility, and keep the game from growing too wild. Having students appeal to the IRA was not something I was looking to encourage. The final non-player faction is nationalist parties around the world. The rise of nationalism was a key contributor to the Leave vote, and I wanted this ideology to exist somewhere in the game.

The game was played similarly to the immigration game, in that it relied on alternating between debate and voting. The Monday before, I gave a brief explanation of the activity and assigned for the class to read the rules and a handful of news articles that combined gave a good snapshot of Brexit. I had assumed the students would have read the material between Monday when I explained the activity and Wednesday when the game was played. What I had not realized was the class also had a significant paper due Wednesday, and many unfortunately (though reasonably) chose to forego the game readings and work on the paper instead. On top of this, some students were in the class on Wednesday who were not on Monday, and had no idea what was going on. Because of these two circumstances, I allowed them fifteen minutes to go over the materials and plan with their team.

Unlike the Immigration game, I then asked for policy proposals before letting them intermingle with other teams. This was because I wanted them to give some context over what they were supposed to be negotiating. To do this, I went around the room and asked each group for a proposal or change to the current proposal on the board. I always began with the UK, and followed with the EU, Republic of Ireland, Scotand, Sinn Fein, then the DUP. This bit of consistency helped the game move along a bit better, and allowed for the bigger factions to set the tone first. Once all of the proposals were on the board, I would then find the proposals of the signatory parties, and ask publicly if there were any concessions or compromises that would be made to move the measure forward. If there was not an immediate solution, which happened in the first round over the border, I then allowed them to privately negotiate among other teams. This process repeated until class ended.

What the students came up with was fairly unrealistic, but I allowed it because it was more important to my SLOs that they be able to negotiate the situation however they wanted. The UK's initial border proposal did not really meet their goals, and in that moment I met with them and helped them correct their proposal, but other than that I let the factions work the measures out between themselves. Their main measures were keeping the movement of goods open, creating a path to permanent residence or citizenship for individuals living abroad, and an Irish border that had stricter customs for Non-Irish citizens but allowed Irish and North Irish citizens to move freely between the two countries, presumably with their passport working like fast pass at an amusement park. The trade deal would never be signed by the EU as they had it drawn up, as it would allow the UK all the benefits of the EU without actually having to be in it. The path to citizenship would have been a bit hard to pull off logistically, and the infrastructure involved in their border solution also would have been tough to conceptualize. However, what

these measures do show is the students abilities to be creative and compromise, and from that perspective I think the students did very well. I especially like the thought behind their border solution, as it was not one I had heard following the real negotiation.

After the initial bit of confusion, the UK did very well. They did a very good job compromising and being practical about their solutions. If I had to choose a "winner," I think the measures passed were best for the UK, as it kept referendums from occurring and put the UK in a good position regarding trade going forward. Where I appreciated the UK's diplomacy, the EU's strength was the blunt ability to negotiate. I think they succeeded in owning their role as price setter, not price taker, and while the measures may not have been the best for them, I think the attitude they brought into the game was phenomenal. The Republic of Ireland got pushed around just a bit. They never quite seemed to take a firm stance on anything, and were pretty subject to other groups. I do not think they ever quite understood their position in the debate, which suggests a partial blame on me as the game designer, though I think the assigned readings would have helped considerably.

Scotland did well with what they had to work with. The debate at times kind of happened around them, and none of the issues had a clear, direct impact on them. However, they were very good with their floor time, and active in informal negotiations. Sinn Fein was home to what I would call the class session's MVP. She had certainly read the material before class. At a moment of indecisiveness with the Republic of Ireland, she called a recess to lobby them her way. The rest of the team simply followed her lead, but it was an incredibly rewarding experience to see a student take the reins on a game I designed and be really successful. The most entertaining moment from this whole experience was in the first round of informal negotiation, when the Sinn Fein team immediately marched over to the DUP team and began a

pretty intense barrage as they lobbied for them to essentially switch sides. I let them go for a few

minutes, because it was very good demonstration of knowledge that I felt the observing students

were learning from, though eventually I stepped in and said that perhaps lobbying a different

faction than the direct opposition might be more fruitful. The DUP began as two students who

had not been in class Monday, and were just being introduced to the game at game time. I think

the students did their best, but the DUP is also probably the toughest faction to play. They were

later joined by a student who had a bit better idea of what was going on, which helped some. I

think there is a version of this game where the DUP and Sinn Fein are both equally motivated

where really good debate and negotiation takes place. Just that interaction could even be a game

in itself.

The agenda setting factions, in the rules, were given an opportunity to give press releases

to influence public opinion after measures were passed, to present to the public that the measures

were either positive or negative for their constituents. The game took a bit of an odd turn where

all policy was debated throughout, but the major measures all passed nearly simultaneously in a

bit of a domino effect. This made it a bit awkward for the press releases, and each faction only

got one. They did well with the one they had, but it made the sliders obsolete, as there was not

enough stimulus going on to make them swing impactfully one way or another.

I feel this game was a success. There was a natural ten minutes at the end of class where

there was not enough time for another round of debate, and I used that to debrief. A very

thoughtful point by one of the students was that, while it was weird to promote ideas they did not

necessarily agree with, it was important to realize that other people have different beliefs based

their fundamental core values and life experiences, and that recognizing that is an important part

of the political process. There also seemed to be a reverence for the complexity of issues that

make up Brexit, which suggests the students also were more familiar with the issue by the end of the game. At the end of and outside of class, some of the students gave me an unprompted thank you and told me they enjoyed the game, which, if they were being honest, means that it was a fun experience for them. Combining these pieces of feedback and the ability to negotiate and think critically that the students demonstrated during the game, I would consider all of my SLOs to be met.

There are some changes I would make were I to do the game again with more agency. First, if it were my own class, I feel the reading would have been taken more seriously as there would not have been a major assignment layered on top of it. Even better, I could have devoted a class to providing context before hand, probably after assigning roles so students could engage with it purposefully. I would have also extended the game over two or three classes, and broken the issues down into smaller sections. Many small issues would have given the agenda setting factions more content to react to. I also would have included the lack of a North Irish government as a major issue, and the sub-issues that went along with it as well. Finally, I would have provided a more solid starting point for the divorce bill debate. It never came up in the live version of the game, though if it had, I believe it may have been an awkward start. I designed it to be more of a bargaining issue, to be used to negotiate the others, but during gameplay I am not sure that is how that would have worked. In a future version, I would put a number on it and what the bill was paying for, and allow students to work from that.

Game 3: Goodrich Entrance Simulation

The third game was the least political, at least in the sense of government. My prompt given to me by my capstone advisor was to design a game that somehow incorporated the movie

Gattica, which would be shown in *Perspectives* as a way of learning about what traits and qualities we admire about people.

This game ended up being the simplest, but also took the most creativity. There was not a clear model of how to show this, like the Brexit game, and I could not use the "debate, vote, repeat" model both of the previous two games shared. With the other games, I had an idea in mind and developed my SLOs to match the broad concept, then created details to push the SLOs further. However, in this game, my main SLO was to have students learn about seeing people in different ways and recognize their own biases and preferences, whether fair or not.

After brainstorming, I realized that Goodrich itself provided a model for this in the way it selects students for the program. First, students are screened for financial need. Then, from the pool of applicants, students are scored on their ACT, class rank, or GPA, whichever is best, a writing sample, and a CV. The best applicants are then given an interview and administered an essay about diversity. From this, the committee chooses the next class of Goodrich scholars. Along the way of this whole process, the committee has to discriminate in many different ways to find the best applicants.

For this game, I was going to have the students model this process. I created thirty fake applicants, with randomly generated names, ethnicities, heights, weights, parts of Omaha or Nebraska they were from, dominate hand, GPA, ACT scores, and class rank. Students would use this information to narrow students down to twelve, who would be interviewed. From the interview, students would get more information which was creatively generated by myself and a colleague[80] who volunteered to help me with the creative load. This information included their prospective major, a letter grade on how strong of a creative and academic writer they were (one

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[80] Josephine Pepin

score for each), and a few lines that gave some back story toward the students goals, situation they were coming from, or simply just a fun fact about them. There is a running joke about how all Goodrich interviewees, myself included, say something about being a hard worker, and as an Easter Egg I put "hard worker" in all of the interview notes. From this information, students then had to narrow it down into the five they wanted to admit. My colleague and I developed potential outcomes for all thirty students if they had or had not gotten in, to help create gravity to the students choices and create a bit of immersion. Some applicants had better lives not getting accepted and others were neutral, not having a great degree of variance either way. However, most applicants were better off being accepted.

Within this process I made some conscious decisions that were meant to either test students, create immersion, or help with logistics. One inclusion I made was a few students that qualified for the regents scholarship, which is a financially equivalent scholarship based solely on a students GPA and ACT. Most universities offer some version of this, and UNO's qualification is a 3.5 GPA or top-third of the class in class rank, and 30 ACT score. Students who qualify for the regent scholarship cannot also take the Goodrich scholarship, and have to make the choice between the two. I was curious to see if any students would notice and refuse those students because they felt they then lacked the necessity for the Goodrich scholarship. I also included myself in the applicant pool, under a different name. I was partially curious to see if I qualified under the class's standards, but also to see if, when I revealed that it was me, students would feel differently in such a way as to increase immersion. Three of the randomly generated categories were only partially random. The class rank was based on GPA and what seemed about right to go with it, so that no outstanding students would be stuck at the bottom. More importantly, the ethnicities of students were designed to be diverse in a few ways. The Goodrich

Program is diversity based, and I wanted there to be an array of different backgrounds represented. Any time the generator gave me a European country, I labeled it "Euro-American," which was meant to stand for a Caucasian applicant whose family has been settled in the United States for quite some time. "Black American" and "Latino American" were also used to represent the same ideas, but for different races. Any other prefix before "American" suggests the applicant's family has very recently come from that country. Finally, the names were somewhat randomly generated, as I wanted to make sure they seemed believable. Therefor, many were fine being randomly generated, but I had to adjust a handful for accuracy. For the schools, instead of listing the dozens of high schools that have applicants apply, students could simply come from one of five regions: North, South, West, and Central Omaha, as well as Rural Nebraska. I included schools so that students had more opportunities to create criteria, and diversifying the parts that applicants come from sounded like a reasonable criteria that might come up.

Unlike the other games, I did not assign anything for this game. It was designed to be run quickly, within an hour of the nearly two hour class. Dr. Richardson actually spent the first half of class talking about the real Goodrich admissions process, and the way it has changed throughout history. This had both positives and negatives. It was good because it helped give the activity some context, but also already had students critical of using things like ACT scores and GPA as criteria, which was something my game was designed to tease out.

An SLO I had developed was that students would need to also sort out a way of how to collectively score the applicants. As well as the excel document with all the information, I made small flashcards with each students information on it. I gave the assignment description, and when all the questions had been answered, I set them off. I expected one or two students to

suggest that they organize themselves in a certain way, but no one did. Instead, students broke off and began to work within small groups instead of all together. There was no sense of community, as some students took some of the cards, some took others, and others yet worked off the raw excel sheet that was projected. After about five minutes of chaos, I considered the SLO failed and decided I would just lead the discussion as we all worked off of the projected excel document. In retrospect, I should have given more context that organizing themselves was something the students needed to figure out, and possibly had a few suggestions for them.

After this initial hurdle, the rest of the class actually developed smoothly. A few good group decisions were made. First, all students under a certain GPA were immediately cut. There was some disagreement about where the cut line should be, but after a series of votes, 3.0 was the line. After this, the group then began to cut students who had another particularly weak score. School region and ethnicity were used as tie-breakers more than the initial criteria. Though fairly late into the process, my character was cut before the interview round. When I revealed this, some students reacted with chuckle but I do not think it had much of an impact.

Narrowing from twelve to five was much more difficult. Some students had grown attachments to certain applicants. Others wanted a diversity of majors, and fought for STEM majors. Others wanted to give art and social science students preference because they felt that they would represent the Goodrich sense of community best. Students were still allowed to use the first round information, and sometimes checked back at GPA or the qualitative info as guidance. With about eight students left, students asked to check the school and ethnicity to make sure they had decent diversity, and there was a good spread at the time. The conversation between the students at this point was excellent. It showcased that they were all using different criteria, and sort of negotiating over the decisions lead to really nice introspection.

Two of the five students they admitted were regent eligible, and I revealed this to them at the end. By the groan of some of the students, I think if I had pointed that out before, they would not have made it that far. Though at the eight person mark there was decent school diversity, four of the final five were from South Omaha. I think after that last check, students assumed they had secured a diverse outcome, and carried on without thinking about it. I think there may have been a different result if they had looked at it once more before locking in their decision. One of the students they admitted had a neutral response, the others positive. Some wanted to see some of the last few cut, and when I revealed one would have made a lot of money and eventually donated it back to Goodrich, some students revealed that may have been a difference maker in their decision.

From the conversation during the game and debrief when the branching timelines were revealed, I believe my primary SLO was achieved. Students took part in exactly the kind of critical thinking I was after. There was a significant amount of introspection occurring, and when students were advocating for their position to their classmates, there were times they were also arguing with themselves and wrestling with their own convictions.

If I were to run this game again, I would have certainly changed how I began it. If I felt there was a productive SLO in prescribing them a different organization structure, I would do that, though simply having an open group discussion worked well enough. An interesting middle ground would be allowing a student to lead the discussion instead of myself, though it would take certain set of personalities in the class to do so. I also would have screened Dr. Richardson's lecture before hand, so as not to give too much context. Beyond this, details can always be added, and until the information becomes too much, giving more described applicants would enhance the game. Another consideration would be to make the gap between the most impressive

students and least impressive smaller, to make the first round more of a grind. Cutting ten

students right away based on GPA eliminates some potential discussion and learning.

Moving Forward

My classroom experiences have provided me with lessons I can take into future teaching

experiences. One is that context is as important if not more so than Shaw and Proctor suggested.

Many of my problems across my three games had to do with the amount of context provided.

While things like the simultaneous due date of the paper in the *International Relations* class were

out of my control, it is still an important lesson to take forward. Running a game in a class that

you have complete agency over is also a large difference from what I did for this project. I had a

lot of license to design the games how I wanted, though I still had far stricter parameters than if

the class was my own. In a regular class in the role of a normal instructor, I also would have been

able to get to know the students much better, and that would have helped with some activities

such as team creation. I also could have expanded my timetable for my games as well.

Another key lesson from my experience creating and running games in classrooms is that

being flexible is an incredible strength. None of my sources talked about flexibility explicitly.

This could be because of the amount of playtesting available to my sources, they had a more well

rounded finished project. However, there were several moments in my games that I had to make

an impromptu change. Especially if one of your goals is to encourage students to be creative, it is

important to be prepared for anything that might come up during a game session.

Through a combination of my research and classroom experiences, I certainly feel

confidant that not only is there a home for role-playing and simulations in college courses, but in

some circumstances, it can be an incredibly effective pedagogical tool for instructors to use. I do,

however, feel that the advice by both Shaw and Proctor of ensuring that role-playing is the

proper teaching method to fit the learning objectives of the instructor. As with all teaching, the first step in using role-playing in the classroom is to verify that the simulation or game will actually meet the objectives of the instructor. In a similar way, there also needs to be sufficient context for a role-playing game or simulation. Not providing this can cause confusion and failure for students to meet the learning objectives. However, when done with a clear purpose, role-playing and simulations can be a unique and effective pedagogy that has the potential to develop students in ways traditional teaching methods can not.

Acknowledgements

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Appendix Table of Contents

Instructions/Premise

You and your group are the representatives of a state in the Nation. The Nation's immigration policy[81] is the most important issue on voters minds this year. Some believe in the positives that come from an easily navigated border and simple path to citizenship, the Nation has become more and more concerned about many of immigration related problems. These include the inability to properly control contraband moving across the border, an injection of more working age people into a relatively job-scarce economy, increased strain on social programs, and, in some areas, a feeling of lost cultural relevance. All of you are up for re-election, and a strong showing in handling immigration will assuredly win the support of your voters. Winning a majority of your own voters will get your re-elected, but winning the highest majority will result in you and your team winning the chairman spot of the legislature[82], as well as winning the game. You will be competing against states with opposing interests, as well as others in your state who are telling voters they can do your job better. If you don't meet enough objectives, another team will win the chairman spot, and if you don't manage to hit a 51% approval rating, you could be out of a job altogether.

The Process

There are two ways you can make policy, unilaterally or multilaterally. A unilateral policy change is something your state does alone that only affects your state directly, though it may affect others tangentially. An example of this is how a state manages their border security. Multilateral actions are policy changes that affect the whole nation. To carry out a multilateral action, the policy needs to be announced, possibly debated, and 3 of the states need to vote in agreement. These policy changes are important, and will require persuasion and cooperation to get passed.

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[81] "Policy", in the context of this assignment and generally when speaking about politics, means both the laws regarding something, and how those laws are carried out. For example, a law funding border security and the way that security force is used are two different kinds of policy.

[82] Lawmaking body, such as Congress or Parliament

Itinerary:

First 10-15 minutes: Meeting with your groups, planning your first few moves

Second 5-10 minutes: Meeting with other teams, negotiating

First round of proposals: unilateral policies announced, multilateral policies proposed and voted on

10 minutes of negotiating

Second round of proposals

Process repeats

The Current Policy:

_____ is currently a signatory to the Geneva conventions and most other international human rights treaties. This means that torture and land mines aren't options.

Quota system – Each classification of country is allowed 10,000 households (A married couple and their dependents).

Each state is given $1,500,000 dollars to put toward their border security and immigration control however they choose. This money is raised from state sales taxes.

The Immigration Place Program, the IPP, is a program designed to settle legal immigrants in the Nation. The amount of funding this program gets is the amount the Nation makes from tariffs off of importing from that class of country. This means the more a class of country trades with the Nation, the more funding immigrants from that Nation get to help them settle and become stable in the Nation.[83] This funding does not go towards temporary residents.

Temporary residency can be gained for a household for employment, safety, or education. These can range from 6 months to 5 years, and can be renewed. The decision on temporary residency is made by both the national and state government, based on the needs and capabilities of both parties.

New immigrants can apply for citizenship after having lawfully lived in the Nation for 3 years with no major criminal record. Marrying a citizen shortens this period to two years.

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[83] For all of you math folks out there, the formula for how much a household gets equals tariff profit divided by households.

Automatic citizenship is given to anyone with at least one citizen parent.

Foreign nationals found in the country unlawfully are deported humanely, after an expedited trial held within two weeks of the charges.

Factions:

Other States

North – The North is the tech capitol of the Nation, and it's cities and suburbs are some of the most desirable places to live in the whole country.

South – The South is a breadbasket of the Nation, specializing in both agriculture and other raw resource extraction (mining, forestry, etc.)

East – The East is the gateway to the rest of the Nation. It's coastline makes it the first stop for most commercial interactions with the outside world.

West – If it's made in the Nation, it's made in the West. The West is the manufacturing powerhouse of the Nation, and most of products are made there.

The Executive

The leader is also up for reelection, and needs to make sure his goals are accomplished as well in this process. If a policy fails to meet any of these goals, the exec will veto the policy. This means all 4 states will need to give a yes vote to overturn it. This is the case for both multilateral and unilateral actions.

Exec goals:

Avoid major economic losses

Maintain relationship with other countries, especially Class X countries.

Ensure due process is followed

Ensure basic human rights are observed

Class X countries – Other wealthy countries. Don't meet immigration quotas. Huge IPP funding per citizen. Immigrants from Class X countries are very likely to be educated or seeking education. Typically generate revenue to meet their increased stress on social programs. Fill high demand jobs. Northwesterland is the country's class X neighbor.

Class Y countries – Class Y countries are countries with developing economies that typically have some combination of circumstances that is keeping them from becoming a Class X country. This could be anything from explosive social issues, corruption in government, or another country applying pressure. Many of the immigrants from these countries are looking for economic opportunity that isn't available in their home country. They often aren't well educated and take low-skill jobs. Southwesterland is the country's class Y neighbor. Local class Y countries, especially Southwesterland, meet their

Class Z countries – Class Z countries are unstable. They are often effected by war or another ethnic conflict. These immigrants arrive through necessity, as their safety is at stake in their home country. They are often poorly educated, and possess little but the clothes on their back.

Statistics

National Statistics	
Annual Immigration by Country Class	
Class X	3,350
Class Y	10,000
Class Z	10,000

State Economic Information		
	GDP	Sales revenue
North	40,000,000	2,000,000
South	20,000,000	1,000,000
East	32,000,000	1,600,000
West	28,000,000	1,400,000
Total	120,000,000	6,000,000

	Class Immigrants settled in each state
North	
Class X	1500
Class Y	1000
Class Z	1200
South	
Class X	350
Class Y	3500
Class Z	3500
East	
Class X	1000
Class Y	1700
Class Z	3000
West	
Class X	500

Interstate Commerece		
	Imports Value	IPP Tariff Collection
Class X	20,000,000	2,000,000
Class Y	25,000,000	2,500,000
Class Z	10,000,000	1,000,000

Deportation Statistics			
State	People	Country Class	People deported
North	400	Class X	300
South	4000	Class Y	3000
East	600	Class Z	2200
West	1500		
Total	5500		

Class Y	2800
Class Z	2300

Scoreboard

Voter Approval Rating
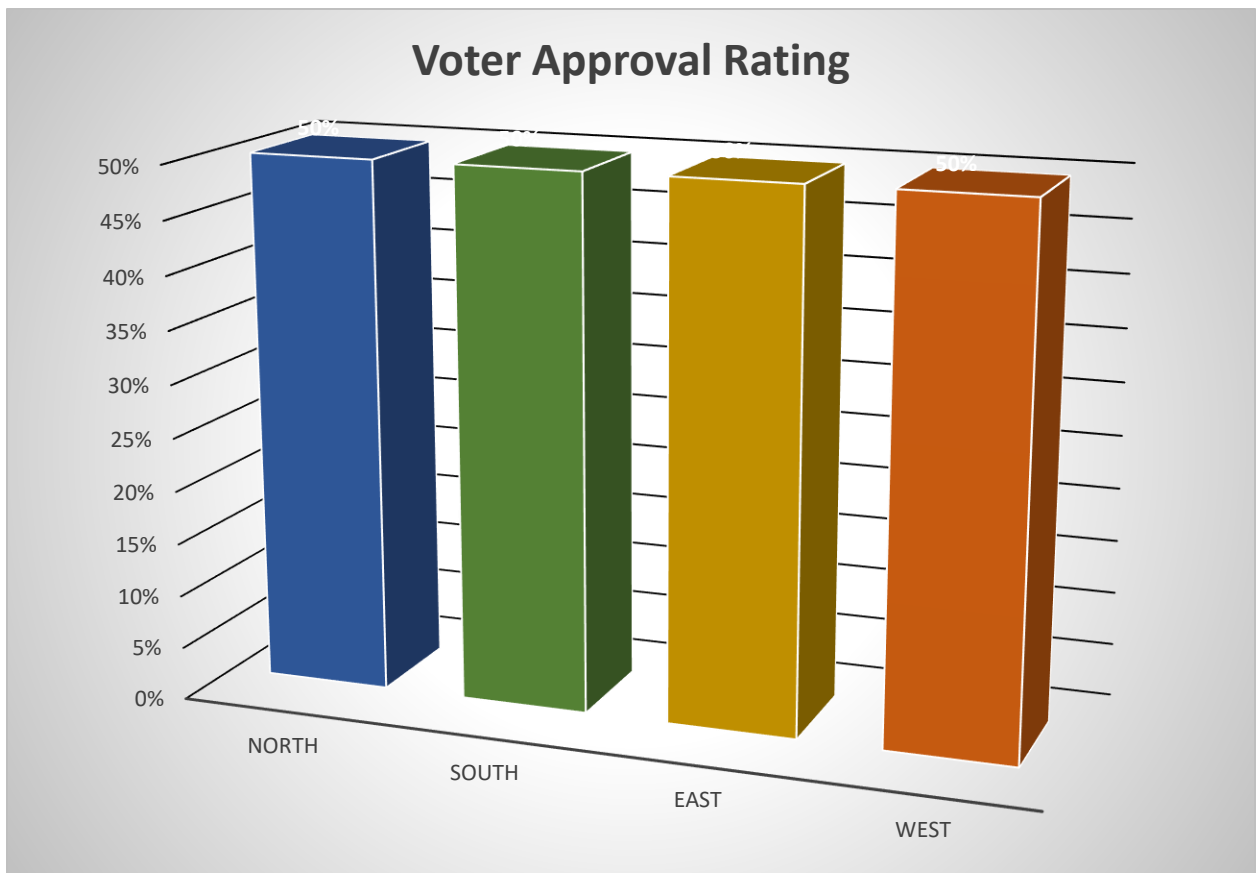
Map
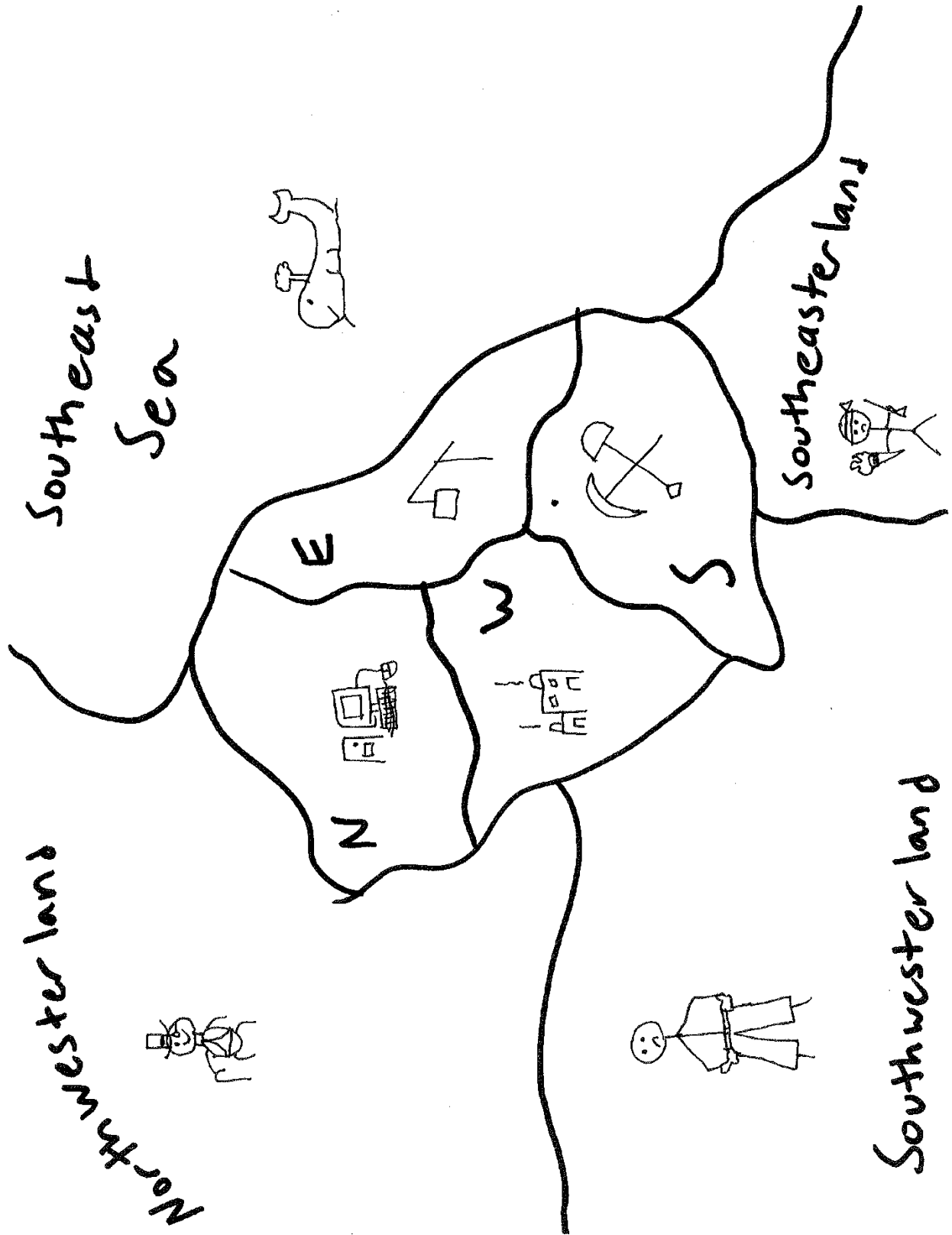
NORTH

The North is the jewel of the nation. The weather doesn't get much hotter than 80 or colder than 60. The economy of the state is more advanced than the other states. The top 1% of the nation almost exclusively lives in the North, and it has moved past a production based economy to a service based economy. Those in the North are better educated than the rest of the nation.

The North sees the plights of Class Y and Z countries and feels it is the Nation's job to aid those countries. This belief stems from the state media outlets and their coverage of the conflicts in these countries, as well as the perception of the Nation's relative wealth to these countries. While the North I sympathetic and willing to help these kinds of immigrants, due to high real estate prices they don't actually have that many living in the state compared to the others, and they aren't as visible as Class X immigrants. Their border with Northwesterland rarely has issues.

North representatives, your citizens will want you to:

Increase the quota for citizens from Class Y and Z countries.
Reduce border security funding
Increase settlement funding
Create an easier path to citizenship

Your citizens will NOT want you to:

Do the opposite of the above targets.
Decrease their property value
Ruin relationships with other countries

Making moves towards these goals will make your citizens happy, and more likely to vote for you next election. Get a high enough rating, and you will be re-elected. If you get the highest rating at the end of the game, your state will get the chairman spot and you will be the overall winner.

Another decision made earlier in the term was that the state flags could all use updated. Designing and bringing a flashy new flag would invigorate state pride give your approval a bit of momentum going into the debate. Here are some flag designing tips!

SOUTH

The people of the South have been hardened by years of working in fields, mining in tunnels, and cutting down trees. Despite the gorgeous natural beauty the South has to offer, lack of economic mobility means very few come from other states to live there and very few who live there can afford to move away. This lack of exposure to the rest of the Nation, much less the rest of the world, has made them very weary of outsiders.

The South has two borders, with South Easterland and South Westerland. Due to this and the abundance of entry level positions in its economy, it is far and away the biggest acceptor of legal immigrants. It is also the largest deporter of illegal immigrants. This puts a further strain on an already underfunded and stressed state border security force. International crime takes advantage of this, and drug and human trafficking across both borders are some of the highest in the world. The South's citizens demand urgent and aggressive solutions to the above problems. They also seek a constraint on legal immigration, as they feel if the South can't support its current population, they shouldn't continue accepting more people.

South representatives, your citizens will want you to:

Decrease the quota for citizens from all, but especially Class Y and Z, countries.
Increase border security funding
Create a harder path to citizenship

Your citizens will NOT want you to:

Do the opposite of the above targets.
Do anything that promotes other countries interests before domestic interests.

Making moves towards these goals will make your citizens happy, and more likely to vote for you next election. Get a high enough rating, and you will be re-elected. If you get the highest rating at the end of the game, your state will get the chairman spot and you will be the overall winner.

Another decision made earlier in the term was that the state flags could all use updated. Designing and bringing a flashy new flag would invigorate state pride give your approval a bit of momentum going into the debate. Here are some flag designing tips!

WEST

The West is a world of steam and steel. It takes raw materials and turns it into anything the rest of the Nation, or even world could need. Anything made in the Nation, be it as simple as toothbrushes or as complex as cars, probably comes out of the West. There's money to be made in the West, but automation and other factors have many workers nervous about their jobs. Many of these jobs pay quite well and require nothing more than strong body and solid work ethic.

The West has a complex relationship with immigration. It fears the influx of immigrants may harm a fragile job market and increase unemployment. Many of the immigrants currently working in the West are illegal, and the West realizes that this cheap labor helps keep products cheap by reducing their operating costs. If this labor pool were removed, prices across all products would increase, which could slow down the consumer economy the West relies on. The West is caught between decreasing new immigrants, but maintaining its current immigrant workforce. Class X immigrants typically don't affect this labor pool.

West representatives, your citizens will want you to:

Decrease immigration quotas from Class X and Y countries.
Make the deportation process more difficult.
Move the burden of new immigrants into the West to other states.

Your citizens will NOT want you to:

Do the opposite of the above targets.
Hurt the manufacturing industry the West relies on.

Making moves towards these goals will make your citizens happy, and more likely to vote for you next election. Get a high enough rating, and you will be re-elected. If you get the highest rating at the end of the game, your state will get the chairman spot and you will be the overall winner.

Another decision made earlier in the term was that the state flags could all use updated. Designing and bringing a flashy new flag would invigorate state pride give your approval a bit of momentum going into the debate. Here are some flag designing tips!

EAST

The East is unique in that it has no land border with any foreign country. Instead, it has an enormous coastline, and is the gateway from the rest of the world to the Nation. The East is in the business of logistics, be it people or products. The East is one of the most diverse places in the world; many immigrants of generations past who came by sea didn't move far. Small settlements of these cultural populations still exist, such as Little Farawayland, or Diasporatown.

Immigration is nothing new to the East. It's always accepted immigrants from all country classes, though the wealthier Class X countries tend to move on to the North. The East doesn't mind new immigrants coming in from other countries, but isn't convinced the new settlements programs are necessary; their own families didn't need them when they immigrated, why should the newcomers? The East also takes illegal immigration personally, for similar reasons. The East believes in diversity, but also that it is on the individual, not the State, to create the life they want. That being said, they are sympathetic to those who entered the country legally, and are typically in favor of removing barriers to citizenship.

East representatives, your citizens will want you to:

Create an easier path to citizenship
Create a more aggressive deportation system, reduce the number of illegal immigrants in the country
Cut or eliminate the settlement program

Your citizens will NOT want you to:

Do the opposite of the above targets.
Hurt the international or domestic trade the state's economy hinges on.

Making moves towards these goals will make your citizens happy, and more likely to vote for you next election. Get a high enough rating, and you will be re-elected. If you get the highest rating at the end of the game, your state will get the chairman spot and you will be the overall winner.

Another decision made earlier in the term was that the state flags could all use updated. Designing and bringing a flashy new flag would invigorate state pride give your approval a bit of momentum going into the debate. Here are some flag designing tips!

Brexit Activity

The class will be split into factions, and will attempt to "solve" Brexit. In the process of doing so, it will be up to each class to negotiate and advocate for their factions goals. This will be done through rounds of debate and signing of agreements between the associated parties.

Main Factions and leaders:

"The UK" - Theresa May

R. of Ireland – Leo Varadkar

"The EU" - Angela Merkel

Agenda Setting Factions and Leaders:

The DUP – Arlene Foster

Sinn Fein – Michelle O'Neil

Scotland – Nicola Sturgeon

Agenda setting factions have their own objectives and could be involved in legislating, but they are also responsible for swaying public opinion in their favor of their side before the end of the class. They will be able to present quick press releases when decisions are made, and their ability to frame agreements in such a way that it is good or bad for N. Ireland or Scotland will change public opinion in that country. I will keep a slider on the white board showing how swayed the N. Ireland public is by what's going on. It will start at 50%, meaning the public is feeling neutral. If Sinn Fein breaks a 75% majority, N. Ireland will reunite with the Republic of Ireland. If the DUP breaks 75%, N. Ireland will break ties with the Republic altogether. Scotland will have a similar slider, however starting at 0. Should the slider hit 50%, an independence referendum will be triggered. If it hits 75%, it will be successful.

The first ten minutes of class will be devoted to teams meeting together and strategizing. Then, the initial negotiation will move forward, initially attempting to solve the border dispute between the Republic of Ireland and N. Ireland. From there, the factions will all work to try to negotiate a solution that best meets their goals. Not all parties need to agree to a policy for it to be passed:

For anything regarding the Irish border, the Republic of Ireland, the UK, and the EU need to all agree.

For anything regarding the "divorce bill" the UK and the EU need to agree.

For anything that would change the structure of the N. Irish government, the UK, Republic of Ireland, the DUP, and Sinn Fein would all need to agree.

If not mentioned above, should a decision involve in a state or country or their citizens, it is up to the entities involved to agree.

After the first round of negotiations, students will be allowed to regroup with their team to strategize with each other and have 1 on 1 conversations with other factions. By the end of class, the factions are tasked with:

Coming to a conclusion on the Irish border and the status of N. Irish citizens.

Coming to a conclusion about the "divorce bill".

Coming to a conclusion on how to handle nationals of one country/state living in another.

Drafting a new trade deal between the UK and EU.

Required Reading:

This explains the N. Ireland negotiations up to this point reasonably

https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/northern-ireland-has-become-an-unexpected-hurdle-for-brexit/2018/02/28/7efd54e4-1c94-11e8-98f5-ceecfa8741b6_story.html?utm_term=.7aaddb820ef8

Irish Citizenship Laws

http://www.citizensinformation.ie/en/moving_country/irish_citizenship/irish_citizenship_through_birth_or_descent.html

This article provides a starting point on the divorce bill

http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-politics-42161346

This last one is a starting point for nationals living abroad

http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-north-east-orkney-shetland-43540522

I would also suggest groups familiarize themselves with Brexit up to this point and current agreements related to their country (such as the Good Friday Agreement).

Non-Player factions

These factions won't have students assigned to them, but may react in significant ways depending on the negotiations. These factions may not appear at all, but simply represent possible outcomes of decisions and factors the player factions will have to consider.

Paramilitary groups – The Irish Republican Army and the Ulster Volunteer Force are the two most infamous paramilitary groups from The Troubles. Should either the culturally Irish/Catholic or culturally English/Protestant populations in N. Ireland feel threatened enough, attacks may begin again.

The United States – The USA and UK have what has been labelled as a "special relationship." British and American military forces share intelligence more than any other two nations in the world. The two countries are also strong trade partners. Trump recently visited with Leo Varadkar in the US, and wishes to visit the Republic of Ireland soon. Ian Paisley, an MP from N. Ireland, has personally invited Trump to N. Ireland.

The Radical Right – Nigel Farage is credited with founding the UK Independence Party, as well as igniting the movement that would lead to the Brexit referendum. Often associated with the "Britain First"

movement, the party is very nationalist and isolationist. If it were an American Party, they would be labeled "alt-right," and they face never-ending accusations of Islamophobia, which they rarely deny.

The UK

The UK government is currently made up of a coalition between the Conservative Party, led by Theresa May, and the DUP, led by Arlene Foster. The coalition arose when, in the last election, the Conservative Party lost its majority and united with the DUP to continue its role as the majority in parliament. Theresa May has been Prime Minister since Brexit, and though she didn't personally advocate for it, a majority of the "Leave" advocates in parliament were Conservatives. Prime Minister May has been adamant that she will work towards a Brexit that gives Britain the best deal possible.

Goals of the UK:

Retain N. Ireland and Scotland

Pay as cheap a divorce bill as possible

Work towards a beneficial trade deal for Britain

Work toward a border that would allow Britain to control what moves in and out of N. Ireland.

Pro tips: You are going to be under the gun for a majority of the negotiations. You certainly have the most to lose from Brexit, and it's not close. However, if you're very careful and diplomatic, you can still salvage a positive Brexit experience.

The EU

German Chancellor Angela Merkel has made a point of expressing the importance of the European Union far more than her contemporaries. Germany tends to have a disproportionately high amount of authority in the EU due to their influence on monetary and fiscal policy. Because they are the highest "net-payer" in EU programs, they get de facto authority on managing the Euro and where EU funding goes. The EU is put into an interesting position with Brexit. While Britain was well within their rights to withdraw, it is certainly not something the EU wants to encourage.

Goals of the EU:

Secure the status of European nationals in the UK

Make an example of the UK by driving up the divorce bill as high as possible

Come to a conclusion on the Irish border.

Pro Tips: Remember, it's the UK that is up against the clock on these negotiations. Don't let yourself get rushed if the UK gets panicked. That being said, having solutions for European citizens would be best sooner than later.

The Republic of Ireland

The Republic of Ireland is an EU country, but its relationship is unique enough with Britain that its voice and opinion are closely heard and considered. Leo Varadkar is the current Taoiseach (Pronounced Tee-schock, the name for their executive) of Ireland. The Republic of Ireland is inherently involved in all discussion with the status of N. Ireland as dictated by the Good Friday Agreement, a treaty that defines the relationship between the UK and the Republic of Ireland in regards to N. Ireland.

Goals of the Republic of Ireland:

Keep the Irish border as free and open as possible.

Advocate for the rights of those wish to maintain their status as Irish in N. Ireland

Ensure the UK maintains proper boundaries with N. Ireland's government and people.

Pro Tips: While the Republic of Ireland is an EU member, it has negotiated and advocated for Ireland independently of the EU at times. The EU definitely has more influence than the Republic itself; it may be wise to try to steer them towards advocating to meet your goals, rather than working completely independently.

Scotland

Scotland voted overwhelming to stay in the European Union. In 2014, a referendum for independence failed, but Brexit could very easily not only trigger a second referendum, "indyref2", but be the cause for the motion to actually pass. Nicola Sturgeon, the current Scottish Minister, has promised not to push the subject until at least fall of 2018 when Brexit details will hopefully be clearer. Sturgeon is the leader of the Scottish Nationalist Party (SNP), which is dominate in Scotland and has had interesting ramifications for UK politics in the past. Chief among concerns involving Scotland's independence is that its economy would have an awkward amount of independence, as there is currently no guarantee they would be readily accepted into the EU. They may need to go through the standard process of application, which would take years. In the meantime, foreign trade in Scotland would be in a weird limbo.

Goals of Scotland:

Advocate for a "Soft Brexit", which would maintain many EU benefits and ties

If "Hard Brexit" policies are made, frame it as a reason for Scottish independence.

Ensure that Scotland would receive automatic EU membership should they become independent.

Pro tips: The trick to succeeding as Scotland is convincing the public that what didn't work in the last referendum either will work or has changed to work in this referendum.

Sinn Fein

 Sinn Fein began as the government extension of the Irish Republican Army, the insurgent group that is often associated with "the Troubles" of N. Ireland. The Good Friday Agreement gave the group legitimacy, and they now operate as a recognized and peaceful political party. To this day, they advocate for culturally Irish people in N. Ireland. They also represent the traditional "liberal" perspective of N. Irish politics. Their end goal is to return peacefully bring N. Ireland back under control of the Republic of Ireland. Sinn Fein long held a strong minority role to the DUP, but in the last election came within one representative of the DUP. The two parties have been unable to actually create a functioning government since, hung up on issues such as the Irish Language Act that Sinn Fein insists on including as a topic for discussion which the DUP has adamantly refused. The UK level MPs from Sinn Fein campaign on a

message of abstention. Because Sinn Fein doesn't recognize the Queen as the ruler of N. Ireland, they refuse to swear the oath that would allow them to actually sit in and vote in parliament. The party has branches in both the North and South, though the North is where they are most impactful.

Sinn Fein's goals:

Advocate for "Soft Brexit", which would mean a Brexit that retains some ties and benefits to the EU.

Should "Hard Brexit" Policies be pushed or passed, frame them as reasons N. Ireland should unite with the Republic.

Pro Tips: Careful not to ignite the paramilitary groups. Historically, the IRA has always been pushed as the bad guy in the Troubles and your de facto association could do more harm than good.

DUP

The Democratic Unionist Party, or DUP, is lead by Arlene Foster. The party is characterized as their adamancy that N. Ireland maintain as close a relationship as possible with the UK. If they were an American party, they would be labeled pretty staunchly conservative, especially when it comes to social issues. It's through the DUP's efforts that same-sex marriage and abortion (in most cases) are illegal in N. Ireland, contrary to the rest of the UK. Through special circumstances, the DUP finds itself punching above it's weight at the parliamentary level, as its coalition with the conservative party gives it influence disproportionate to its very few MPs. This influence was most visible when Arlene Foster vetoed an early agreement on an Irish border contingency plan, much to the annoyance of the conservative party (The bill would be cosmetically changed and passed within the following days). N. Ireland has been without a government, as in the last election the DUP dropped several representatives to Sinn Fein, it's its liberal,

culturally Irish counterpart. The two parties have not been able to come to a power sharing agreement due to aggressive disagreements, chief of which is the Irish Language Act that the DUP refuses to table. The DUP is one of the few non-England based parties that campaigned strongly for Leave, and Foster has made it clear that the party wishes to be treated no differently than the rest of the UK.

Goals of the DUP:

Push for a "Hard Brexit," which would mean a clean break from EU with little remaining ties.

Limit the amount of exceptions from the rules affecting the rest of the UK that N. Ireland receives

If "Soft Brexit" policies are passed, frame them as bad for N. Ireland.

Pro Tip: Careful about being too on the nose about British interventionism could incite the extremists in N. Ireland.

Candidate list

	Potential Students									
1										
2	Name	Gender	Ethnicity	Height (feet)	Weight (Pounds)	Dominant Hand	School Region	GPA	ACT	Class Rank (b
3	Evita Herminia	Female	Peruvian-American	5'1	127	Right	South Omaha	3.6	31	78
4	Ayokunle Chimwemwe	Male	Ghana-American	5'4	120	Right	South Omaha	3.4	33	72
5	Rebecca Smith	Female	Euro-American	5'10	157	Right	West Omaha	2.8	25	70
6	Nieves Carina	Female	Venezuelan-American	5'5	153	Right	South Omaha	2.5	19	60
7	Craig Stevenson	Male	Euro-American	5'8	133	Right	Rural Nebraska	2.6	21	54
8	Michael Clifton	Male	Euro-American	5'8	145	Right	Central Omaha	2.7	31	58
9	Cole Kwadwo	Male	Nigerian-American	5'6	185	Right	West Omaha	2.8	28	59
10	Christopher Howells	Male	Euro-American	6'4	210	Right	West Omaha	3.4	30	66
11	Brenda Nicholson	Female	Euro-American	5'7	167	Right	Rural Nebraska	2.7	22	69
12	Ashly Johansenbergenstein	Female	Euro-American	5'11	166	Lefty	South Omaha	3.5	31	83
13	Young-Gi Seong-Su	Male	Korean-American	5'7	220	Right	West Omaha	2.9	19	73
14	Thaksin Sakchai	Male	Thai-American	5'7	133	Lefty	North Omaha	3.2	33	68
15	Ruperto Rodriguez	Male	Mexican-American	5'9	188	Right	West Omaha	3.7	21	86
16	Lawrence Reed	Male	Black-American	5'7	174	Right	North Omaha	3.5	25	75
17	Disha Sonal	Female	Indian-American	5'4	131	Right	North Omaha	3.9	26	96
18	Tiffany Jackson	Female	Black-American	5'6	166	Lefty	West Omaha	3.5	29	80
19	Kyle Yin	Male	Chinese-American	5'4	135	Right	North Omaha	3.3	27	74
20	DJ Williams	Female	Black-American	5'5	129	Right	South Omaha	2.6	25	62
21	Sandeep Sarvesh	Male	Indian-American	5'6	145	Right	South Omaha	3	30	75
22	Marisela Cande	Female	Mexican-American	5'10	158	Right	Central Omaha	3.7	28	86
23	Diana Petrona	Female	Colombian-American	5'2	169	Right	Rural Nebraska	3.6	31	97
24	Sakura Atsuko	Female	Japanese-American	5'6	140	Lefty	South Omaha	2.6	19	59
25	Ismael Severo	Male	Latino-American	6'1	186	Right	Rural Nebraska	3.9	28	94
26	Hina Masami	Female	Japanese-American	5'4	132	Right	Rural Nebraska	3.8	23	90
27	Narciso Camilo	Male	Mexican-American	5'10	196	Right	Central Omaha	2.9	25	72
28	Heriberto Benito	Male	Latino-American	5'7	129	Right	Rural Nebraska	3.1	19	68
29	Jacob Powers	Male	Euro-American	6'	185	Right	South Omaha	2.6	24	59
30	Olga Modesta	Female	Latina-American	5'4	122	Right	West Omaha	2.8	33	62
31	Zachary Bruno	Male	Euro-American	5'6	161	Lefty	Central Omaha	3.4	27	86
32	John Carrington	Male	Euro-American	6'0	170	Lefty	South Omaha	3.9	32	97
33										

Candidate list, second round

		Info Revealed during interview	Major	Formal Writing	Creative Writing	
2	be	Info Revealed during interview	Major	Formal Writing	Creative Writing	
3		Hard Worker, oldest of 7 children, parents gone a lot	undecided	B	B	
4		Hard Worker, Came to US very young, loves soccer	undecided	A	B	
5		Hard Worker, wants to study psychology to "Learn about the mind", Mom was a Goodricher	Pysch	C	B	
6		Hard Worker, Works at her moms store, has 2 dogs	Communications	C	C	
7		Hard Worker, Captain of Quiz Bowl Team, Speech Team, and First Chair Tuba	Pre-Law	C	A	
8		Hard Worker, Wanted to be in Air Force, but disqualified due to eye sight problem	Undecided	B	C	
9		Hard Working, offered to help make Patty's computer faster during interview	Computer Scientists	A	C	
10		Hard Worker, excited to take on the challenge of college, seems confused for some reason	Political Science	A	B	
11		Hard Worker, very active with church, went on a mission trip to Haiti	Social Work	B	B	
12		Hard Worker, wants to become a music therapist to help people with alzheimers like her grandfather	Music Education?	B	A	
13		Hard Worker, court translator on the side, collects baseball cards	undecided	C	B	
14		Hard Worker, really into all kinds of dance, from ballroom to breakdancing	Dance	A	A	
15		Hard Worker, wants to be a comic book artist, favorite comic book is Calvin and Hobbes	Art	B	B	
16		Hard Worker, Likes to be called Lolo, applied on guidance counselor's recommendation, unsure what Goodrich is all about	Undecided	C	B	
17		Hard Worker, walks dogs on the side, very popular on social media	Pre-Nursing	A	A	
18		Hard Worker, Knits a LOT, "addicted to Fanta	Undecided	B	A	
19		Hard Worker, very professional, wore three piece suit to interview	Civil Engineering	A	B	
20		Hard Worker, doesn't actually DJ, hates when people ask, runs marathons	Biology	A	C	
21		Hard Worker, Very into conservation, runs Community Garden	Horticulure	B	A	
22		Hard Worker, presents at poetry slams and does public reading, excited to try to contribute to 13th floor magazine	Creative Writing	B	A	
23		Hard Worker, insanely good photographer, does wedding pictures on the sign	Graphic Design	B	A	
24		Hard Worker, wants to get Goodrich scholarship so her parents will be proud of her	Physics	B	D	
25		Hard Worker, Loves Animals, saves up for the expensive zoo pass	Marine Biology	A	B	
26		Hard Worker, was VP of Math club, does parents taxes	Accounting	A	C	
27		Hard Worker, has great jokes, volunteers at retirement home	undecided	C	A	
28		Hard Worker, goes by Bert, loves to cook, but hates peeling potatos	Undecided	D	B	
29		Hard Worker, lost athletic scholarship to knee injury, sees Goodrich as a good first step to a new plan	Undecided	B	C	
30		Hard Worker, Played 4 sports in Highschool, obsessed with Serena Williams	Exercise Science	C	B	
31		Hard Worker, really into anime, plays settlers of Catan every weekend	Computer Science	B	B	
32		Hard Worker, works at Gamestop, lead in school play	English	A	A	

Candidate list, Accepted outcomes

	e Writing	If they get in...
1		
2	e Writing	If they get in...
3		Becomes an RA, meets husband whose another RA
4		Makes lifelong friends at Goodrich kickball, who he then plays intramural soccer with
5		Keeps changing major, to the extent Goodrich can't cover all of her credit hours
6		Brings dogs to destress fest, becomes a Vet
7		Joins UNO Speech team, has a phenomenal time
8		At UNO feels stressed by everything going at campus, feels jealousy seeing the ROTC program all over, drops out
9		Picks up an internship with Union Pacific
10		Becomes outstanding student, comes back to teach today in a Perspectives class in 2018
11		Very involved in Study Abroad, visits 6 countries in 4 years
12		Joins pep band, graduates in three years and goes on to get his counseling degree
13		After a hard first semester, has an attitude change and eventually gets a degree and has a successful career in anthropology
14		Studies dance, becomes bored with his classes, and fails out. Gets a job as a dance instructor, makes like, no money
15		Patty introduces him to FUSE, has a very successful project that uses comic books to help with mental trauma
16		Gets degree in Business Administration, works as the CFO at the Henry Doorly Zoo
17		Support network of Goodrich helps her through her overloading herself in her first year, goes on to teach nursing at WITCC
18		Is inspired by Dr. Romero's class, eventually works with kids with cognitive impairments
19		With the Goodrich support network, absolutely crushes college, becomes a well known engineer, and is later a Goodrich Booster
20		Becomes physical therapist with the Minnesota Timberwolves
21		Becomes very involved in the environmental initiatives on campus, the experience of which nets him a job with the EPA
22		Joins Goodrich friend's sorority, has a really fulfilling experience
23		Photography is showcased in UNO's 13th floor magazine, seen by TIME, and hired by them.
24		With the resources of Goodrich and UNO, excels as a physicist, and works for SpaceX
25		Gets a job working with the sharks at the Henry Doorly Zoo
26		Get's an internship with Berkshire-Hathaway, eventually becomes CFO of Band-Aid, becomes Goodrich booster
27		Gets degree in gerontology after Dr. Romero's class, becomes CNA, beloved by retirees
28		Gets Degree in nutrition, works for Eat Fit Go, has interns peel potatos
29		Inspired by Goodrich's philosophy of philanthropy, becomes a youth coach, find fulfillment helping kids develop their abilities
30		Ends up becoming a physical therapist at Malkovich in Aksarben
31		Meets new friends in Goodrich to invite to his Catan Group, they play most weekends through college
32		Leads Goodrich to Kickball title all 4 years, inspired by Dr. Richardson's Autobiographies class and becomes a famous biographer
33		

Cadidate list, Rejected outcomes

2	If they don't...
3	Becomes Hairstylist
4	Joins TLC, meets new friend on intramural team
5	Goes to UNO, Changes major too many times, doesn't finnish
6	Gets a job at humane society, becomes depressed when she slowly realizes how many don't get adopted
7	Coaches High School school speech team, doesn't go to college, works middle management at target for awhile
8	Goes to UNK, has success overcoming his dissapoint and finds personal growth at the relatively secluded university
9	Joins Anonymous
10	Goes to UNK, Develops drinking problem
11	Goes to grace university instead, gets a degree she never uses
12	Joins pep band, graduates in three years and goes on to get his counseling degree
13	Without the Goodrich support network, struggles in school until dropping out
14	Tries out and becomes a back-up dancer for beyonce
15	Writes freelance web-comics while getting a degree at Metro. Enjoys his work
16	Gets degree in Business Administration, works as the CFO at the Henry Doorly Zoo
17	Finds herself dependent on adderol after continually overscheduling herslef
18	Becomes freelance fashion designer for drag shows
19	Gets his degree, gets engineering contracts with the state of New Hampshire
20	Becomes DJ
21	Joins TLC, changes major after Dr. Robinson's class to English
22	Joins sorority, but quits after two years after struggling to make friends
23	Plans on taking a gap year, but is so successful that she just does photography as her main job
24	Struggles at UNO, finally graduates after 5 1/2 years.
25	Tries to go to school on the coast, next to more marine wildlife, but can't afford cost of living. Becomes Roofer
26	Get's an internship with Berkshire-Hathaway, eventually becomes CFO of Kleenex
27	Works at Retirement home full time, beloved by retirees
28	Drops out, Becomes apprentice at Grey Plume, gets stuck working at a 4 star restraunt in Boise Idaho
29	Becomes electrician, always feels like he lost on sports career
30	Deterred by rejection, joins military, has successful career and achieves rank of major
31	Meets new friends in TLC to invite to his Catan Group, they bail often though
32	Leads TLC to Kickball title all 4 years, inspired by Dr. Robinson's Autobiographies class and becomes a moderately famous biographer